THE

ADVERTISEMENT;

OR,

TWENTY YEARS AGO.

A Novel,

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

A round unvarnished tale.

SHAKSPEARE.

Let me embrace these sour adversities,
For wise men say, it is the wisest course.

SHAKSPEARE.

He look'd in years . . . .

DRYDEN.

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1818.



THE

ADVERTISEMENT,

&c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

Time, which blunts the edges of the finest feelings, had considerably worn down the keenness of regret experienced by Medora and her friend at quitting their own beloved home; and the frequency and regularity of the correspondence between them and the venerated inhabitants of Kirkaldy Hall, tended not a little to ameliorate the pangs of separation. In one of the letters which Eliza had lately received from her father, he mentioned, amongst other things, by way of news, that the Barnards were about to

and D——, in order to take possession of the estate bequeathed by the generous uncle, to his deserving nephew, where, in the loved shades that cherished his infancy, the now happy Barnard, meeting the reward of his integrity, hoped to pass the remainder of his days. William, he added, having expressed a decided preference for holy orders, and his father highly approving his choice of a profession which he himself held in such veneration, had sent him to an eminent school, from which he would emancipate for Oxford; where, Mr. Johnston added, it was his opinion, from the natural strength of his abilities, he would pursue his studies with considerable advantage and *eclat*.

This intelligence communicated a great degree of pleasure to the whole party, with all of whom William Barnard, from his earliest infancy, had been an acknowledged favourite; but with none more than with Eliza. She had always stood forth as the champion and protec-

tor of Mrs. Addison's little insinuating *protegé*: and whenever William came to the hall with his little basket, it never returned empty, if Eliza could collect sweetmeats, fruits, or any little delicacy wherewith to load it, home. Thus it may be easily conjectured with what satisfaction she now received this account of her former companion; and how much she rejoiced that the excellent talents which she knew he possessed, instead of being buried amidst the clods of his ancestors, would be called into action, and an opportunity given him of displaying them to advantage. As to personal attainments—and the colour mounted to her cheeks, whilst she felt ready to acknowledge that she had not seen any one, since she had quitted her dear native village, that could vie in point of appearance, nor boast greater attractions, than William Barnard.

Revolving weeks passed on, and the party could now relish the gay scenes

and enticing amusements which were presented in regular rotation before them; avoiding satiety by partaking of the delicious banquet with moderation. But, of all that here allured the senses in the shape of amusement, nothing afforded so rich a regale to the mind of Mrs. Addison, as the fascinating power of music. For, in Bath, harmony has certainly fixed her seat; and here, also, her sons and daughters particularly excel in the execution of this soul-subduing science! The public concerts therefore possessed peculiar charms for them all, and here they seldom missed attending, accompanied by their newly acquired friend, Miss Dalton, who, if not a first-rate performer herself, still knew enough of music as a science, to admire and appreciate its most beautiful compositions. This lady, from having been for some time a resident in this splendid city, had acquired a chosen and select society of visiting acquaintance, to most of whom

she had introduced the trio; and through her means they became acquainted with many agreeable and accomplished characters.

In consequence of this, they were now induced to mingle in several private parties, where music was the order of the day, or rather of the night, and where Medora's elegant performance, and exquisite voice, obtained for her the highest eulogiums. Mrs. Addison herself, sometimes, wishing to promote the hilarity of the evening, and doating upon music, condescended to touch the harp's enchanting strings, delighting others, and receiving gratification herself from its fascinating melody.

Having accepted cards of invitation from one of Miss Dalton's friends to a private concert, they had not long taken their station in the room, before a party entered, who, from their *outré* appearance, attracted their attention, but more

particularly—that of Miss Dalton, who thought she ought to know one of the ladies who composed it; but her memory in this case had proved treacherous, and she could not recal her name. The party in question took their places immediately opposite; and as the overture that moment begun, she had no farther attention to spare for them, and they were nearly forgotten, till between the acts, when her attention was roused by a lively genteel man demanding of one of the ladies if she was going to the theatre the next evening?

"I don't know," returned she, drawling; "what is the performance?"

"The tragedy of Edward the Black Prince."

"Oh!—is that a tragedy?—well, I declare I didn't know that was a tragedy, or—

"Certainly,"—cried the gentleman interrupting her, in his eagerness to ex-

plain,—" and the 'Amateur of Fashion' has volunteered to perform the part of Edward."

"Oh!—delightful!" replied the lady; "there will be a brilliant house then, no doubt; and I shall certainly persuade my friends to take places. But I had much rather have seen him in the character of the dear divine Romeo, where he dies so exquisitely—oh! 'tis enchanting to see him die!"

"Whose death is Miss Lawford so cruelly rejoicing in?" demanded a smirking middle-aged beau, twirling an opera-glass in his fingers, which he from time to time applied to his half-closed optics. —"I don't know who would refuse to make their exit, if they were sure of obtaining applauses from such beautiful lips."

"You are always quizzing, Moncil, though you know I don't regard you," replied she in the same drawling tone; "but tell me, what have you been doing

with yourself these last three days; I mean, what have you been seeing?"

"Seeing!" reiterated he—"why I last night visited Polito's menagerie, to see if he could exhibit a more extraordinary animal than myself; but, alas! I couldn't discover one"—laughing at his own conceit.—"Yet," continued he, "though my expectation of meeting my equal was not gratified, I was nevertheless extremely edified by a passing conversation between a little hump-backed fellow and a countryman of his acquaintance, respecting the quadrupeds. 'How curous,' exclaimed little humpey, stretching his neck to get a distinct view of the ponderous elephant, 'it is to see one of the varmint specie have so much sense!'—'Why, you noodle,' retorted his companion, 'that there cratur have nothin to do with the varmints; that is one of the brute creation in itself.'"

Here a burst of laughter from the surrounding group drowned Miss Law-

ford's delicate exclamation of—"Oh! barbarous!—what a vulgar anecdote!—I declare you grow worse than ever!"

"What are you retailing there, Moncil?" asked a lady, bustling up—"your's is always the merriest booth in the fair, for nobody can be grave, or even serious when you are present."

"To confute your assertions, madam, look at this lady,"—pointing to the one seated next to Miss Lawford,—"she has not uttered a syllable, nor, I believe, deigned to grace her countenance with a smile, during the whole of my exertions to entertain, this evening."

"How is this, Miss Sherwel? cannot you contradict this vile aspersion on the fair fame of your gaiety?" inquired the lady.

"I have not found it agreeable, madam," replied she with an air of pique, "to sport sentences for the entertainment of the company."

"What, you thought Moncil talked

enough for you and himself too? and to confess the truth, he is generally charitable in this particular."

"Fie! fie, Mrs. Hurd, your wit is too keen; upon my honour it cuts me up without mercy." Here the music recommencing put a stop to this curious dialogue, from whence our novices had been enlightened by a specimen of fashionable conversation, and Miss Dalton had also been convinced that she had not been mistaken in the lady before her, whom she now recognised as her former acquaintance,—the all accomplished Miss Sherwel.

A few mornings after the concert, as Medora, having taken her glass of water at the pump-room as usual, had seated herself with her mother and Eliza in order the better to attend to a beautiful piece, with which the band were amusing the company, she perceived the same party, who had afforded her so much entertainment, dash into the room.

Miss Dalton, who had previously joined Mrs. Addison, seeing herself in such immediate proximity with Miss Sherwel, could not avoid paying her respects; when a recognition, as well as an introduction to their respective friends, took place between the ladies; Miss Sherwel professing herself much rejoiced at having met her former friend after a lapse of so many years. She then proceeded to say that she had visited Bath with a party of their friends, to spend the remainder of the winter; and that her mother was at present on a visit to her sister, who had been for some time married; but added, that she expected her to join their party, ere the expiration of the season.

Miss Lawford, having taken two or three turns up and down the room, professed herself fatigued with the exercise, when the party adjourned to the seats at the upper end, and were preparing to take possession, when Moncil prevented

them by the hasty exclamation of "ah! for heaven's sake, don't sit down there; you'll be classed by the Bath wits amongst the "*old wizards under the clock.*"

"What absurdity is Moncil broaching now?" inquired Mrs. Hurd, looking for an explanation.

"Absurdity! my dear Madam? no, give me leave to inform you, that this is a portion of the very essence of delicate satire: why have you never seen the "*intercepted letter?*"

The "intercepted letter!" questioned all in a breath, "no; what is it about?"

"O, a brilliant effusion from the pen of one, among the many poetasters, with which Bath abounds; containing a satire against many of the old dowagers of quality, and most vilely ridiculing some of the reigning belles who rank high in the annals of taste and fashion."

"*Shocking!*" drawled Miss Lawford, —"what an ungallant creature the *man*

must be, for none but a male hand could pen such an ill-natured thing, don't you think so?" looking tenderly at the speaker.

"Most superlatively so!" returned Moncil, "and the renegade has my full consent to be tossed in a blanket for his apostacy; and what would be much worse, in my opinion, to be sent to Coventry by the dear creatures for a whole season afterwards."

CHAPTER II.

"CAN you tell me, Moncil," cried Miss Lawford, "who those very awkward looking people are sitting opposite."

"Yes, they are a Mr. and Mrs. B——, most delightfully rich, and lately imported from the country. But to admire them properly, you should see them at the rooms, when the lady is in all her splendor, and commonly dressed out with every hue that Iris has bestowed."

"But do you know the rest of the family?" questioned Mrs. Hurd.

"Oh Heaven defend me, yes!—the adorable Misses and Masters," continued Moncil, "do you know the eldest son?"

"To be sure I do," returned Mrs. Hurd, "but have you heard that he has

lately added to the family honours by being dubbed a Captain? he is therefore no longer *Mr.* but *Captain B——*, at the service of the ladies."

"Indeed!" cried Moncil, laughing, "well, I had not heard that;" then addressing himself to Miss Lawford, "do you see Mrs. Macgormin yonder? she is prancing up and down, looking, as she thinks, to the best possible advantage."

"You will allow, she is a smart woman?" said Miss Dalton.

"Smart," echoed Moncil, "why, yes, as far as fine clothes go; but she is almost a foot too short, and is, besides, what I call a clumsy figure."

"Uncharitable!" exclaimed Miss Lawford, in her drawling tone; "do you know," turning to Miss Dalton, who sat next her, "this creature has been persuading me to walk up and down the room with him; but I shall not be persuaded."

"And why not?" asked Miss Dalton.

"What! to be stared at, and criticised by all the company?"

"Oh dear! no," answered Moncil, simpering, "*you* don't wear short petticoats, and pink stockings, and trick yourself out to excite observations like some people; *you* therefore might venture to accompany me with impunity, since the only sentiment you could excite in the hearts of the gazers, would be that of admiration!"

"Flattering creature!" drawled Miss Lawford.

"Look there," cried Moncil, "do you see that young lady with Mrs. E——, she is come for one campaign in Bath, and is I am told upon the full catch. But, unfortunately failing in the grand requisite herself, she is likely to hang in hand for the season."

"She is very pretty," observed Miss Sherwel.

"Yes, that is true," returned this incorrigible male gossip, "but *beauty* with-

out the more essential requisites is of little value you know,"—shrugging his shoulders, and grinning at his own depth of observation.

Oh! thought Medora, recurring to past scenes, and a smothered sigh escaping at the recollection; how insipid, and uninteresting is this conversation, if conversation it may be called, where an ill-natured individual takes upon himself to criticise the rest of the company, when compared with that we used to enjoy with Augustus Falknor. And heartily tired with her new acquaintance, she whispered her mother to take her leave.

"My dear Madam," exclaimed Eliza, as soon as they were beyond hearing, "I hope all the people that we are to meet with here, are not like those we have had a specimen of this morning? If so, I shall experience no regret, in returning to our peaceful and rational shades, where we can hear a little com-

mon sense, and entertain a portion of charity for our fellow-creatures."

"Why I trust, my dear, there are exceptions to be met with, although it must be confessed, that vanity and frivolity are most prevailing foibles, amongst the sons and daughters of fashion; and one coxcomb thinks he cannot do better, in order to obtain celebrity, than to copy the manners and conversation, however absurd or *outré*, of another who has gone before him in the path of notoriety. Hence the disgusting sameness which prevails amongst this frivolous race, till one, more absurd than the rest, is daring enough to strike out something even more ridiculous than his predecessors, for the servile herd to follow."

"But the ladies, mamma," said Medora, "can any thing be half so disgusting as the ridiculous affectation of that Miss Lawford?"

"Affectation, as you observe, my love,

of every kind cannot fail to be disgusting. Miss Lawford appears to me a very weak young woman, who, failing in the requisites of a good understanding, is obliged to resort to more futile means, in order to support the part allotted her in society. But, my dear girls, the shifting scenes in this Panorama of life, you must learn to appreciate, as they present themselves successively before you, so as to turn them to your own improvement and advantage. They will afford you many a lesson, and I trust you will be at no loss to apply them properly."

Eliza Johnston, who possessed strong health, with an exuberancy of animal spirits, had long felt a desire to make her *debut* in a ball-room; but, owing to the delicate state of her friend, she knew such a desire could not be complied with, and she had hitherto not even hinted at such a thing; but now that Medora had received so much benefit from the waters, and she saw her blooming again in health

and spirits, Eliza thought she might venture to obtrude a wish towards attaining this so long coveted gratification. Mrs. Addison who, although she did not intend her daughter to emerge from obscurity, into the broad glare of fashionable dissipation, still on the other hand, it was not her wish that she should be immured in the drawing-room. No sooner, therefore, did this desire of Eliza's reach her ears, than she set about complying with it. Both the young friends had been indefatigable in acquiring their dancing lessons, and Mrs. Addison could have no fears of their being able to acquit themselves properly in this mazy accomplishment; she therefore no longer hesitated to form her party for the next cotillion ball.

With no small degree of expectation did these two young ladies look forward to the promised Thursday, which was to present them to the upper rooms; and many an air-built structure was erected,

in anticipation of the pleasure which they each hoped to receive.

Mrs. Addison having agreed to wait for her party in one of the adjoining rooms, and it being rather late before some of them arrived, the ball-room was nearly filled when they entered it. The *coup d'œil* therefore of the whole was particularly striking; and Eliza exclaimed, whisperingly, to her friend, "Good gracious! we are certainly got into the dominions of some fairy prince; can any thing be more magnificent?" and indeed the brilliancy of the lights, the splendor of the decorations, and the striking appearance of eight or nine hundred people, attired in the first style of elegance, conspired to warrant the supposition. Even Mrs. Addison, accustomed as she had been to view the superb, and splendidly decorated palaces of her own country, acknowledged, that nothing could be more truly elegant than the *tout-ensemble* of this spacious rendezvous of gaiety.

The master of the ceremonies, whose eye is always quick to discern the entrance of every fresh party, approached to pay his compliments, and to make the usual inquiry, if any of the ladies wished to dance, when Eliza's sparkling eyes, and animated countenance, flushed with pleasure in a moment at the question, and conveyed a ready assent to the penetrating eye of the gentleman; who, bowing, retired to go in search of the expected partner.

Medora, whose spirits, from her late indisposition, had not acquired their usual tone, felt rather intimidated, at beholding herself thus indiscriminately mixing in such a motley scene; she therefore felt no desire to join the festive group, and "foot it on the light fantastic toe," till the evening was more advanced.

In a few minutes the suspence of Eliza, in regard to whom she was to figure away with, was at an end, by beholding the prince of this fairy domain

advancing towards them, and conducting a very genteel, handsome looking young man; for it is one amongst the many of this gentleman's *agremens*, to suit those, whom it may come within his province to introduce to each other. Hence, he never dreams of presenting an *old* man, for *old* men will sometimes attempt to dance; or even a *middle-aged* gentleman, to a young girl; and by this means he constantly assures to himself the approbation of all parties; and Medora, in concert with others, now bestowed upon him a portion of hers, when she saw her friend led off by so eligible a partner.

The young people of the party, being all, except Medora, engaged in dancing, Mrs. Addison, by way of affording her amusement, endeavoured to make the circuit of the room; but which, from the crowd that surrounded the dancers, she felt some difficulty in accomplishing. Being determined however to persevere, as Medora had expressed a wish to wit-

ness Eliza's commencement, who had been led by her partner into a set at the upper end of the room, they moved gently on, and continued to gain ground till they had nearly arrived at the top, when they found their progress entirely stopped by a press of company, all pushing one way, and all appearing to have one object in view.

Wondering what magnet could thus have the power of attracting every one to the same spot, Mrs. Addison continued to proceed, when she heard a gentleman remark to another at his elbow, that the "*Amateur of fashion*" was in the set at the top of the room, and would soon begin the dance. "I wonder if he performs as well in a cotillion, as he does in Romeo," repeated another.—"Aye, and if he sports his diamond *buttons* to-night?" continued a third —"Ah! no," replied a young lady, "I have been regarding him for some time, and he has only his *buckles* to-night, which he gives

every one an opportunity of observing, by kindly stretching out one or other of his feet to every group that passes." Another move forward, as the crowd pushed on, brought Medora and her mother nearly opposite to this wonder of an hour; who, with all the *nonchalance* he could possibly assume, stood gazing around him, and endeavouring with all his might to appear unconscious of the bustle he was creating. In a few minutes his task commenced; when the company, after watching this *rara avis* through a few of his movements, began to drop off, each making their own comments on his performance; but the majority agreeing, that the Graces had not aided him to vault in the mazy dance, any more than to shine in the courts of Melpomene.

Having beheld quite as much as they wished of the "*Amateur*," they were proceeding to make their way down the opposite side, when they suddenly en-

countered Miss Lawford escorted by her partner, the attentive Moncil; when, instantly recognizing Medora, she exclaimed, with an air of triumph at her own good fortune in being so well attended, "Don't you dance to night?—dear me, come to a ball and not dance!—oh, you should dance." The tone of exultation in which this was uttered, might have discomposed the nerves of some young people, but the invidious question failed to disturb the equanimity of Medora.

Passing on they perceived Eliza, conducted by her partner, coming towards them. "Oh," she exclaimed, "I have been seeking you in the card-room, not knowing which way to bend my steps; and my dear Medora," she added, dropping her voice, "you never saw such a scene, do come and behold it."* The press of company was almost as great here, as it had been in the ball-room, owing to the number of byestanders that

were crowding round the tables. In one corner sat a lady, decrepit from age and infirmity, scarcely able to hold her cards, and much less to distinguish their characters, playing with three gentlemen, who appeared to have no objection to pocketing her money; whilst she seemed as much absorbed by the game, as if her very existence depended upon losing or winning the stipulated stake. On the contrary side, what a contrast presented itself: a lady, apparently not more than three or four and twenty, engaging with equal avidity three gentlemen at short whist, and guinea points. The frequently long drawn sigh of apprehension, which burst from her bosom, and the hectic of agitation which flushed her cheeks, when she regarded the inauspicious appearance of her cards, obscured those graces which certainly adorned her countenance; and prevented the observer from discovering those traits of beauty, which,

but for these midnight vigils, would have shone conspicuous.

" Will no one have the charity to admonish that young creature?" said an elderly lady with a look of compassion, " when they behold her on the very verge of a precipice?"

" Oh, I assure your ladyship," replied a little dapper man in black, " that Mrs. H—— knows very well what she is about; every card that she plays tells; and she is much more *au-fait* of the game, than either of her contemporaries. I had the honour of playing a rubber with her in her own house, at half past two this morning."

" And do you think that being an adept in the game will save her from ruin?" demanded the lady.

" Why, it must be confessed," returned Mrs. H——'s champion, " that it is a pity she devotes so much of her time to this fascinating science; more

particularly so, as she has a little family, on whom she might bestow a portion of it to greater advantage." So saying, he wheeled round to the back of the lady's chair, to pay his compliments, and congratulate her, upon her very superior skill in playing the game of whist.

"More lessons, my dear girls," said Mrs. Addison, "from which I hope you will reap advantage!"

"Oh!" exclaimed Medora, "what a disgusting sight is a female gamester! My heart shudders at beholding either of these spectacles, and I am sure I shall detest cards as long as I live."

CHAPTER III.

"*Twenty Years*" prior to the present period of this history, the Hon. Arthur Falknor completing his twenty-first year, had been called upon to take possession of an unincumbered estate which he inherited in right of his mother; and which in a great measure rendered him independent—except in filial duty, and that regard and veneration which he thought due to his remaining parent.

In the meridian of youth's delightful period, Arthur Falknor expressed a decided wish, whilst that period lasted, to visit foreign realms, and study foreign manners. A desire, so entirely consonant with his own schemes and wishes, met the immediate assent of Lord Falknor; who, through the means of this

highly valued son, hoped to gain one more step in the ladder, by which he was to mount to honours and riches; and full of youth, health, and vivacity, Arthur quitted his father, in order to commence his early tour.

Mr. Falknor, the intimate, and highly esteemed friend of his cousin, the present Earl of Ashdale, alike resembled him in the elegance of his person, the harmony of his manners, and the integrity of his character. And when he quitted his native soil, to visit other climates in search of what he might have found in greater perfection at home; *viz.* comfort, safety, and honour, Lord Ashdale was conscious of a void in the measure of friendship, not easily filled up; till love, kindly compassionating the loss he had sustained in a friend, humanely stepped in, and presented the beloved partner of his future days, to balance the deficiency.

Having remained abroad for the space of two years, and visited most of the

cities and towns of any note upon the continent, Arthur, as has been already related, was hastily recalled by his father, in order to fulfil the engagement he had contracted for him, with the relatives of Lady Anne Eastheath. With this arrangement, the elegant Arthur, in spite of the duty and affection which he owed his father, felt an invincible repugnance to comply. Even before the commencement of his continental tour, a woman so deficient in mental accomplishments, and possessing so strong a propensity for masculine acquirements, as Lady Anne had ever decidedly done, could not have been the object of his choice; how much less so now, that he had been accustomed to the society of foreign ladies; who, if they cannot vie with the fair daughters of Albion's isle in sterling beauty, have yet frequently been thought to excel them in feminine grace and attractive accomplishments. Whether the hero in question had experienced the force of this

remark, remains to be proved; but thus much is certain, that he ventured to risk his parent's severest displeasure, by positively refusing to light the nuptial torch in concert with Lady Anne Eastheath. A refusal, which, coming from the man she would have preferred to the rest of his sex, had the effect of determining her to give up all thoughts of a matrimonial establishment; and deciding her in future to indulge her taste for the mechanical arts, from which she derived the greatest degree of pleasure, she resolved to "live and die in single blessedness," having never once repented the resolution thus hastily formed, whilst there remained a fruit-tree to nail up, a piece of park paling to repair, or the immense treat of superintending the construction of "*a pig-stye.*"

By this decisive step Arthur had deeply incurred the resentment of his father, who had set his mind upon this match; it accorded so well with his mercenary

views, and he had by his cunning manœuvres brought it so well to bear, that to be foiled just in the completion, by the intractability of the very son whose welfare he had been so sedulous to promote, was beyond all bearing; and his anger knew no bounds. Venting, then, his reproaches, and vowing to punish the delinquent for his obstinacy, unless he discovered some way of obliterating the stain, which through his means had been cast upon his fair fame, he quitted his astonished son, to chew the cud of his disappointment in private.

No one could entertain a higher sense of filial duty than Arthur Falknor; and nobody would have made greater sacrifices than himself, in order to evince it in its fullest extent; he therefore felt great compunction in being thus obliged to disappoint his parent in this his favourite project. Any thing less than the sacrificing himself in a point where his happiness or misery for life were at stake,

he would have complied with; but here it was impossible; and he now sought his offended father, in order to soften the harshness of his refusal by offering every palliative in his power.

"By thus defeating *my plans*, Sir, you have entirely marred your *own prospects*," indignantly replied the incensed parent to the humble intercessions offered by his son; "Prospects," resumed he, "which were opening upon you like a glorious dawn, to gild your future life; but which, your perverseness, like intervening clouds, will entirely obscure. But I suppose, Sir," continued he, in the same indignant tone, "you consider yourself as equally independent of the world, as you hold yourself to be of your father; however, time may teach you the fallacy of such conceit and obstinacy."

"My dear father, wound me not by reproaches like these, as cruel as they are unjust," returned his mortified son.

"In every other request I shall be most happy to obey you; but, believe me, Lady Anne Eastheath is a woman, that, however worthy or amiable she may appear in the eyes of others, could never have been any thing more than she is at present in the eyes of your son. Excuse, therefore, I implore you, this one venial act of disobedience, and put me to the proof in any other shape you think proper, and see if I hesitate one moment to comply with the duty I owe you."

"Oh, I have no doubt but you are very ready, except in what I most wish you to perform," grumbled the still irritated Lord Falknor; "you will have no objections to accept the lucrative offer of executing a confidential public trust, which I have with some difficulty and much labour procured for you from the minister; till you learn that it will oblige me, and then," bowing ironically, "you will be happy to obey me in any other way."

" You wrong me, indeed, Sir," replied Arthur, much hurt at thus finding himself the object of his father's ridicule. " I shall be most happy to accept any appointment with which the minister may be inclined to honour me; and whenever my country requires it, I will with alacrity quit my native land in its service. But, can you tell me, Sir, to what quarter of the globe it is likely my duty may call me?"

" How should I be supposed to know that, Sir? The minister is close and wary; he never divulges his plans but on very particular occasions. No, no; in order to obtain his confidence, a man must be something vastly above the common line; I mean, in respect to talents; and possess no small share of interest in the cabinet into the bargain.—And yet if I chose to boast, I might say, that I stood as fair a chance of obtaining intelligence now and then as to what was going forward, as my neighbours; and that my interest and

intimacy with his Grace of L—— has frequently enabled me to collect hints which have been of very material benefit."

The good man had now mounted his favourite hobby, and was prancing away full speed from the subject which had so deeply occupied him but a moment before, to the great relief of his son, who took especial care not to interrupt him. He therefore continued to canter away till he had nearly exhausted his topic, when he concluded by saying, that he would endeavour to procure a private audience of the great man, and he had no doubt but that he should be able to learn the secret of his destination.

Impatiently, then, did Arthur Falknor look forward to the desired communication. He had certainly expressed a ready acquiescence with his father's wish of sending him abroad, whither indeed it was his most ardent desire to go; but he could not remain altogether indifferent as to the kingdom he was destined to visit.

His secret wishes led him to prefer any of the Italian states, whither he put up his most earnest petitions that his kind destiny might convey him.

Having succeeded beyond his expectation in appeasing the irritable nerves of his father, Arthur waited impatiently for his return from the minister's levee, in order to learn his doom ; but an increase of suspense only awaited him. Lord Falknor had failed in his attempt to gain the great man's private ear, and all he could glean from the whispers buzzed about the circle, tended only to confirm the different opinions of the different persons who composed it. One, asserting from his own private knowledge, that the new embassy was destined for China, another contending that it was for Spain, whilst a third insisted that the despatches were actually made out for America. None of these places agreed with the hopes and wishes of Arthur, and he sighed from apprehensions of his fate.

The time at length arrived, when, full of expectation, and accompanied by his father, the Hon. Arthur Falknor repaired to court, in order to receive his credentials and instructions for conducting a foreign embassy. And, when the words "you will repair to the court of Sardinia" sounded in his ears, the welcome intelligence struck to his heart, flushed his animated countenance, and irradiated every feature with joy.

The vessel which was to convey Falknor on his destined voyage awaited him; and dispatch was the only thing required in his mission. "*Dispatch!*"—no word in the English vocabulary could have been more consonant to the feelings, or vibrated more delightfully on the auricular organs of the happy Arthur, than this; and on the wings of the wind he once more bade adieu to his native land.

The delight, at once so visible to every beholder, which overspread the counte-

nance of Falknor on learning his destination, did not escape the observation of his father; and what is more, with the observation came also a train of vague surmises, and half-formed suspicions, which tended not a little to ruffle the serenity he was beginning to acquire. The alacrity that Arthur evinced, in accepting the commission with which he had been furnished; the anxiety he had discovered whilst the place of his destination remained unknown; and, lastly, the joy that shone so conspicuously in every feature upon learning that it was to the court of Sardinia he was going, were circumstances which, in his opinion, when combined, held a very suspicious tendency. —"Arthur has already been abroad for a considerable length of time," argued the alarmed father; "and has, no doubt, in his progress over the continent, frequently visited Italy." Then his repugnance to conclude the match with Lady Anne Eastheath, whom no one in their

senses would have dreamt of refusing, unless shackled by some other entanglement. This was a circumstance alone which, to his alarmed imagination, seemed "confirmation strong" of a something which wildly floated in his imagination, and which he dreaded to fathom; for, whilst there remained a doubt, there also existed a hope, that this highly favoured son, in whom centered all his expectations of future aggrandizement, had not so far forgotten his fatherly admonitions as to sacrifice himself by contracting an improper or unworthy alliance. Cherishing this consolatory hope, Lord Falknor endeavoured to remain satisfied for the present; but suspicion once awakened, was not easily lulled again to forgetfulness; and although he wished to encourage every suggestion in favour of this beloved son, yet he also determined to watch and scrutinize every thing relative to him with the eyes of an Argus; and if he should be able to discover that

he had acted irreverently with the duty which he owed to himself as a parent, he should be made to abide the consequences of his severest displeasure. Thus meditated, and thus resolved, a haughty and ambitious father!

CHAPTER IV.

Ignorant alike of these animadversions upon his conduct, and of the consequences likely to ensue from them, the unsuspecting Arthur continued to wing his way, with prosperous gales, over the curling waves, that, proud of their burthen, bore him in safety to the destined port. Here a reception awaited the young negotiator befitting his dignity; and nothing intervened to prevent his executing the mission with which he had been delegated, with credit to himself and honour to his country. His despatches, which were always well written, and regularly received, could not fail of obtaining for him the highest encomiums; a circumstance particularly gratifying to Lord Falknor, who still che-

rished the flattering hope of being able, through the means of his son, to obtain the highest pinnacle of preferment, to which he was lured by the finger of Ambition.

But, how weak, how imbecile is human fallacy! and, short-sighted mortals, when were you permitted to explore the unfathomable abyss of futurity; or, to scan the wise and unsearchable ways of never-erring Providence?

The negotiation was at length completed with his Sardinian Majesty, much to the satisfaction of all parties; the despatches relative to the conclusion signed, sealed, and duly delivered in England by a trusty messenger, in whom the diplomatist could confide; and he himself expected to follow them immediately. The gratified father, now losing all remembrance of his son's late lapse from duty in his present acquired glory, reckoned the tardy hours till his return; but he came not. Letters alone arrived,

stating that he was unavoidably detained upon the continent for a short period, when he would again have the pleasure of embracing his beloved parent in his native land.

Here again was ground for alarm, and eagle-eyed suspicion in the bosom of Lord Falknor. "What," questioned he within himself, "can thus detain Arthur abroad after his public business is concluded? sure he had time enough between the acts to have executed any private concerns of his own!" and again resolutions of punishment, and loading him with a father's malediction, if he were deficient in the points he expected, passed his lips.

Time rolled on, and still the fugitive did not return. The different periods at which it was expected that he might have arrived, brought only to his friends, disappointment and regret; and those who before only lamented his absence as it might be detrimental to his interest,

now entertained serious fears for his safety, and perhaps even for his life. Innumerable had been the inquiries respecting him, from his alarmed friends and relatives, without obtaining any intelligence in return, save that he had quitted the Sardinian Court immediately after the conclusion of the business upon which he had visited it, on his supposed return to England. That our intercourse with the continental countries, through the vigilance of Buonaparte, at this period had been considerably excluded was true; but, that ways and means of conveying intelligence did still exist in spite of his tyranny, was also equally certain, although subject to casualties, and a length of time in arriving; the surprise therefore of hearing nothing from him daily increased, and the unhappy parent began to lose all hope, and to conclude that some dreadful disaster must have befallen his unfortunate son.

A prey to the most agitating suspense, Lord Falknor passed his days in hopeless uncertainty. His health, from the constant irritability of his nerves, began to decline; he lost his spirits, shunned society, and created alarm in the bosoms of his friends, as to what might be the result of indulging such poignant and unavailing sorrow.

Henry, the second son, had always shewn too volatile a turn of mind for his father to build much upon him. His light temperament, buoyancy of spirit, and volubility of tongue, but ill accorded with that steadiness of character required to aid the ambitious views Lord Falknor had ever entertained for his children; and, in being thus bereaved of his cherished hope by the absence of Arthur, he had lost all; and his gloriously-erected air-built structure now tottered to its fall.

For many months Lord Falknor continued to feed his discontent, and melan-

choly had "marked him for her own," when to the surprise of every one, an entire change appeared to take place in his character; a change, as unaccountable as it seemed unnatural and inexplicable. From incessantly deploring the absence, and perhaps absolute loss of his favourite son, he now never expressed the smallest degree of concern respecting his fate; and if any one inadvertently alluded to him, instead of exciting the burst of grief and regret such a subject would formerly have done, he endeavoured to give a turn to the discourse by slightly observing, that we must submit to Providence in these cases, that complaints were unavailing, and that perhaps all things considered, it might be for the best that he should not return. Thus poor Arthur, who had hitherto been the pride and glory of his exulting father, the elegant and accomplished companion of his attached friends, and the delight of his affectionate brother,

was now in danger of being forgotten, if *silence* could have expunged his remembrance from the hearts of those who loved him. But she extended her oblivious hand in vain; for, in the heart of Lord Ashdale, the memory of his unfortunate cousin existed in full force; and his Lordship ceased neither to regret, nor to use his utmost endeavours to discover if he still remained in being. Repeated investigations had passed, backed by his interest, through every channel of the Continent, but without effect; for after the most indefatigable search at the end of two years, he remained as much in the dark respecting his lost friend, as at the commencement of his search; so deeply was his fate enveloped in doubt and painful uncertainty.

About this period the prolific brain of Lord Falknor, disappointed in the schemes he had so ingeniously fabricated, in order to elevate his first-born to an accession of wealth and dignity, en-

deavoured to manufacture a web, which was alike to ensnare, and subjugate the second. But Henry, too volatile, and keen-sighted, to become an easy prey to his designing father, no sooner caught a glimpse of the snare so artfully spread for his entanglement; than like a bird, which expands its wings in sudden flight, to avoid the threatened destruction of the fowler's net, he flew off to Ashdale-park; leaving his offended father, a second time, a prey to dissappointment and regret, in consequence of the conduct of his rebellious children.

Here, in the society of his valued rélatives, the gay, the thoughtless Harry passed his days, unheeding and almost unconscious of the chagrin which his flight had occasioned. Under the roof of Lord Ashdale he well knew he should escape persecution, on the side of his father; for, however well Lord Falknor's schemes were arranged according to his own estimation, he was not ambi-

tious of having them laid open to the inspection of his nephew; who, from his own exalted notions and correct line of conduct, was not always inclined to tolerate his uncle's extravagant manœuvres. Falknor was therefore right in his choice of an asylum; for here, the angry expostulations of his father could reach him only through his letters, and those made but little impression on this incorrigible son of Momus; who, proof against all threats, continued to flutter, like the giddy moth around the effulgence that dazzled him, till he rushed headlong to his own destruction; and was borne, a mutilated being, to that home, from whence he had so lately flown on the wings of gaiety and pleasure.

This untoward accident, by raising Lord Falknor's fears for the life of his son, extinguished, for a time, the desire he had entertained of sacrificing him in order to ascend the ladder of ambition; and so long as the poor misguided Henry

continued an invalid, the discordant subject was never broached by either; but no sooner did health again bloom on his pallid cheek, and strength invigorate his exhausted frame, than it was renewed with redoubled earnestness. In losing Arthur, Lord Falknor so entirely gave up all hope of accomplishing his designs through that medium, that he now was never heard to wish for his return; and all the ambitious views he had so lately meditated in his favour, were transferred with redoubled energy to Henry; who, unambitious of the distinction, was obliged to exert his every talent alike to extricate himself from this detestable alliance, and to secure himself from his father's threatened displeasure.

In this situation of things, Lord Ashdale, whose inquiries were unremittingly exerted in favour of his lost cousin, received intelligence from a friend of his in Rome, stating, that he had reason to believe, he had discovered Mr. Falknor, in

a person much resembling his description of that gentleman, who lodged in an opposite hotel. This person, he went on further to say, appeared in extreme bad health, shunned society, and seemed diffident of observation; yet from the cursory views he had been able to obtain of him at different periods, he was confident that, if not Mr. Falknor himself, he must be the very counterpart of that gentleman.

This account, although vague and uncertain, removed the anxiety endured by the friends of the unfortunate Arthur; and Henry, who, from his late illness, was less calculated to support the irritating tortures of suspense, respecting his brother's fate, resolved, at once, to make a striking effort, and in spite of the perils surrounding such an enterprise, when to be an Englishman, was sufficient to incur the hatred and revenge of the inhuman monster who tyrannized over half mankind, to make his way over to Italy; and

in person investigate the truth of this intelligence. " If I should be so fortunate, my dear Lord Ashdale," he exclaimed in the enthusiasm of his heart, " to discover and bring back this strayed sheep, how richly shall I be repaid for risquing my precious person in the very jaws of the tyrant and his satellites."

That this procedure would meet with opposition from Lord Falknor was certain ; but that was a difficulty which the ardent Henry undertook to obviate ; and having succeeded, partly by cajoling, and partly by promising to comply with his father's wishes on his return, he, with proper credentials, obtained through the interest of his cousin, set off on the pinions of hope to discover, and if possible to conduct back to his native country, a fugitive brother.

CHAPTER V.

How tediously lag the wings of time, when laden with a weight of expectation! Thus thought Lord Falknor, as month after month, and year after year elapsed, without producing in their revolving periods, *either* of his absent sons. To have lost one, was, he thought, a circumstance sufficiently afflicting; but a similar fatality seemed to pervade the destiny of both, for, after receiving letters once or twice from Henry at the commencement of his peregrination, the correspondence had suddenly ceased, and he heard from him no more. Thus to be bereaved of both, was an aggravation of his former affliction, which rendered it almost insupportable; and Lord Falknor felt that, like the Patriarch of old,

by the loss of his children his "grey hairs would be bowed with sorrow to the grave." Of what avail was now the retrospection of his past conduct? where were now the ambitious views he had so fondly cherished? or, of what use his idle regret and repentance? Vain! vain! alike his remorse and compunction, whilst the evil remained without remedy!

With increasing years, Lord Falknor's mental and bodily infirmities increased also. In losing his children, he had been deprived of Hope's steadfast anchor which had so long supported his buoyant fancy on the turbulent waves of ambition, and his mind bereft of the elastic spring which had hitherto guided its motions, now preyed upon itself, and was fast sinking into imbecility. In this state, he unfortunately turned his eyes upon the young Augustus, and considering himself as childless, he resolved to ingratiate himself in his favour, take an

interest in every thing that concerned him, and finally to adopt him as his future heir.

Lord Ashdale at first gave into this whim, considering it as a means whereby his uncle might be weaned from the melancholy which so grievously oppressed him. But as Augustus approached towards manhood, fearing his ingenuous mind might be biassed by the pernicious counsels which Lord Falknor was still eager to instil into the mind of his adopted heir, Lord Ashdale preferred quitting town altogether, and residing for a stated period at Ashdale Park; hoping by this means to wean the attachment which his uncle had so suddenly conceived for his son: by no means wishing Augustus to purchase his uncle's favours, by the forfeiture of his integrity.

This step was not at all congenial with the plans, and future prospects of Lord Falknor. To exist without some scheme in agitation, was for him impossible;

and to find his favours slighted, and himself deserted, was a source of great mortification. To conceal the anger he felt at this procedure, was not in his nature; much altercation therefore ensued upon the subject, which however made but little impression upon Lord Ashdale, who, having previously settled his mode of procedure, adhered to it accordingly.

Freed from the trammels which enthralled him, Augustus, light as air, bounded through the embowering shades of Ashdale; inhaling, like the roving bee, perfumes from every flower. Here he matured in manly grace, and every blooming virtue, till love, all-powerful love, jealous of the serenity he enjoyed, lanced one of his sharpest arrows to destroy the envied felicity, and which hitting the destined mark, had rendered his victim a prey to grief, care, and black corroding melancholy.

After the so sudden disappearance of Mrs. Addison, and his idolized Medora,

a material change became visible in the appearance of Augustus. The rose of health which used to expand in his cheek, now scarcely put forth a single petal to mark its former situation. The sparkling lustre of his piercing eyes, was now usurped by a heavy dulness; and a faint and forced smile was all that remained to enliven his heretofore cheerful and animated countenance.

An alteration so striking in their beloved son, passed not unheeded by Lord and Lady Ashdale. They both quickly observed it, and in observing, could not fail to regret the cause. That the impression which he had received from the charms of Medora was greater than he had supposed, Lord Ashdale could no longer doubt; but he flattered himself that, at the age of Augustus, such an impression would only be a transient one, which time, and the absence of its favoured object, could not fail to eradicate. But in this point he deceived himself;

for, absence like the wind, which extinguishes a *spark*, whilst it causes a settled flame to burn the brighter, instead of diminishing the fire which burned in the bosom of Augustus, only added to its brilliancy; and his agitated parents hoped in vain.

Month after month elapsed, and nothing material took place in the conduct or appearance of Augustus, except that his health declined, and he appeared daily to sink under some shock which he had sustained. Still he complained not. To endure, and to suffer in silence was his firm resolve; and if any one hinted their fears on his account, he strenuously affirmed that he was never better; which assertion perhaps a short-lived exertion on his part would warrant; but unable to support the fictitious gaiety he had assumed, he quickly drooped, and resigning the borrowed mask, returned again to his former melancholy.

That a degree of mystery was attached

to the departure of Mrs. Addison, the more Augustus reflected, the more firmly he was convinced. But too much a man of delicacy to attempt satisfying his curiosity at the expense of what she evidently wished concealed, he forbore tampering with either of the Johnstons, who might, he imagined, have been wrought upon to betray the secret; but to enable himself to refrain from making inquiry as to her present residence, no small degree of violence to his feelings became necessary; feelings which every moment prompted him to rebel against his conviction of what was right: but, although victorious in this instance, he could not compel himself to refrain from frequently visiting the hall, which he regarded as the grave of his departed happiness. To wander round its enchanting environs, when the pale moon shed her evening ray, and muse upon his lovely lost Medora; or to visit the spot, consecrated to him by the remembrance of having rescued his beloved from im-

minent danger, and perhaps from death; constituted his only enjoyment. Here he again beheld—in idea—the lovely girl, her tresses given to the winds, screaming for help; help, which her guardian genius enabled *him* to afford her. Again did he behold her repose in his arms, her lovely cheek blanched by the pallid hue of terror; and again did his heart beat tumultuously at the remembrance of the soft sigh, which, with returning life, wafted her breath, sweet as opening roses, in his face! Alas, Augustus! Ill fated youth! Reveries like these, will but add fuel to the flame already consuming thee, and drive thee headlong towards the yawning gulph of despair!

Lady Ashdale could not long remain indifferent to the declining state of her son; and with all a mother's fears, a mother's apprehensions, she expressed her solicitude on the subject. In vain did he assure his doating parents that he

was in perfect health, whilst the alteration, so visible in him for the worse, daily contradicted the assertion; in vain did they pester him with inquiries relative to the symptoms of his disease— Augustus had nothing to reveal; and his half distracted mother fancied she saw the first hope of her maternal heart, fast sinking into a premature grave!

Morton, who had sunk the unremitting assiduities of the tutor, in the kind offices of the friend, had not failed to observe the first dereliction of his *ci-devant* pupil, in favour of female beauty; and fearing that he might be drawn on to act incompatibly with his rank and future consequence in life, hesitated not a moment to acquaint his patron with his suspicions. Hence arose the precautions which Lord Ashdale thought himself justified in taking; and hence also the origin of our heroine's trip to Bath.

It was with infinite concern, that the excellent Morton continued to observe

the seeds of a passion which he had first seen deposited in the bosom of his pupil, blossom, then expand to maturity. And with equal regret, did he reflect that all his endeavours to save him from the toils into which he was so precipitately running, had been hitherto unavailing. For so rapid had been the growth of this pernicious passion, and so firmly had it taken root in the bosom of its victim, that Morton feared it could be extirpated but with life. Again, therefore, did this indefatigable friend seek Lord Ashdale, in order to express his concern, his doubts, and his apprehensions, respecting the present state of Augustus; when his lordship, his suspicions again awakened, saw a tenfold reason to be alarmed at the perilous situation of his son. And now, his nerves shook almost to imbecility, by a foreboding of some dire calamity which might befal this object of his affections, he eagerly demanded of Morton, the course he would advise him to pursue.

This was a point to which the worthy Morton had long wished to bring Lord Ashdale; being fully convinced that nothing but the removal of Augustus could be of essential service; for whilst he continued to nourish the passion which consumed him, by the daily contemplation of the scenes which gave it birth, it was not likely to be extinguished. His advice, therefore, was strenuously in favour of a removal from these enticing shades, calculated only to increase his disease, to a more lively scene, where he might hourly have an opportunity of contemplating others, superior in beauty, perhaps, to the little Siren who had so fatally enthralled him—adding, "that he hoped absence from every thing that tended to remind him of this enchantress, as well as from herself, would, as had been experienced in many instances, have the desired effect."

To this advice Lord Ashdale lent a ready ear; and, as the drowning wretch

catches at the floating feather, so willing was he to catch at any thing that might save his Augustus from impending ruin. Thanking Morton, therefore, for the interest which he took in the welfare of his son, and promising to be guided by his advice, he retired in search of Lady Ashdale, in order to hold a consultation on the subject of a removal.

Her ladyship, equally alarmed respecting the state in which she beheld her darling Augustus, although ignorant of the suspicions which agitated the bosom of her lord, who in compassion to her maternal feelings had forborne to wound them by a communication, eagerly embraced the proposal of quitting Ashdale, and begged his lordship would immediately set out for town, in order to consult their family physician, as to the spot he would recommend as the most advisable residence for their declining invalid.

CHAPTER VI.

Stern winter, awed by the hasty approaches of spring, had gathered up his clouds, and was fast retreating with the burden to his frozen regions in the north, when Mrs. Addison, tired of the repetitions she every day experienced in the vortex of gaiety, where she had spent the last few months of her life, began to sigh for the liberty and tranquillity she had formerly enjoyed at D——. Again she longed to roam the enamelled meads, rich in the luxuriant beauties of the coming season. Again she wished to breathe the fragrant health-inspiring air, and ruminate, amidst its tranquil shades, on him who held pre-eminence in her thoughts. For, although so unaccountably divided by Fate's ruthless hand, and

so long a period had gone by since, happy in their reciprocal affections, they had promised to exist but for each other, she yet still clung to the fond hope of being again united to the man she idolized, and of presenting to her darling child—*a father!*

Lost in these seducing reveries, she continued to meditate, till the postman's rap, a sound replete with joyful anticipation to those expecting intelligence from absent friends, announced letters for some of the party. Quick, as if borne on the expanded wings of a zephyr, Eliza flew to receive the welcome packet; and the sight of her father's well-known signature afforded her the most heartfelt gratification, although the coveted epistle was addressed to another.

In this letter, which Mr. Johnston had preferred addressing to Mrs. Addison rather than to his daughter, as he chose to be more explicit upon some subjects

than he would have been with the young people, he detailed at length the declining state of the young viscount, with his own suspicions as to the cause; and concluded by saying, that the family had already taken their departure from the park, and from the arrangements which had been concluded with him, he was led to imagine that they did not mean speedily to return.

This intelligence, although but partially communicated by Mrs. Addison, created a variety of sensations in the bosoms of her auditors. Regret reigned predominant in that of Eliza; for, in losing the fascinating Augustus, her dear native village would be bereft of half its charms, although his eyes were certainly not so handsome as those of William Barnard. Something more than regret took possession of Medora; and, whilst a pang of bitter disappointment shot across her bosom at the communication, she almost

involuntarily exclaimed, "Augustus gone! then what will D—— be to us when we return?"

"Every thing you wish, I hope, my love;" returned her mother emphatically; which recalled the startled girl to her recollection, while she made an effort to constrain herself; but the blanched cheek and quivering lip betrayed the agitation under which she laboured. This was not unobserved by Mrs. Addison, who, whilst applauding the endeavour, kindly assisted the distressed girl to combat the disagreeable impression she had received, by hastily exclaiming, "I fear, my dear, you forget your engagement to inspect the collection of Italian vases; and as the morning is so lovely, I would advise you to take the advantage of it, and call upon your friends directly."

Left to herself, Mrs. Addison had full scope for her reflections, which were of a twofold tendency. First, it afforded her satisfaction to learn that she could

now return to that harbour of peace open to receive her, the mansion of her friends, without incurring the hateful implication of inveigling in her toils the youthful heir of Ashdale. Secondly, her grief at the alarming state of this heir, and her horror as to what might be its termination, so overpowered her feelings, that she wept for him with all the pity and affection of a parent. "Dear Augustus!" she exclaimed,—"ill-fated youth, to meet such retribution for an act of generosity and humanity! Would that it were in my power to assuage thy sufferings; but, as it is, I am cruelly constrained to be the first to wound thee; and all that remains for me is to pray that time, by alleviating thy miseries, may restore thee to health, and banish from thy memory friends, who, if it had been permitted them, would have esteemed, valued, and ardently loved thee!"

Mrs. Addison had scarcely recovered from the shock occasioned by the poig-

nancy of her feelings, ere her daughter returned. Medora gazed earnestly upon the countenance of her beloved parent, where she fancied she could discern the traces of recent tears, and her own lovely face became instantly shaded by the veil of anxiety; when Eliza, whose volatile spirits seldom suffered a depression for any length of time, by giving an animated account of her morning's occupation, engaged their attention, and quickly restored their banished serenity.

Mrs. Addison now began seriously to reflect upon the propriety of leaving Bath, and returning immediately to D—. The ostensible cause for her having quitted it was removed, in the removal of the Ashdale family; no bar therefore now remained to impede her return. One "*Winter in Bath*," had been sufficient for her; she had heard, although she had not always seen, enough of its amusements, its etiquette, and its cus-

toms to be fully satisfied; and she felt certain that, though it possessed strong allurements for the youthful mind, the young friends would feel no more regret in quitting it than herself, when put in competition with the delight of returning to their own home:—and she determined to propose it accordingly.

Mrs. Sherwel, who, they had been given to understand, would join her daughter's party, had been for some time arrived; and was now dashing with avidity through the whole routine of pleasure, ever open to receive the dissipated and the gay. This was a woman, whose manners and habits of life, could never be congenial to those of Mrs. Addison; yet, as she was known to Miss Dalton, and others of the party with whom she had associated since her residence in Bath, she had been led on almost insensibly to mingle with her in the few places of public resort, which she had been

tempted to enter: this, with a morning call occasionally, was all that had hitherto passed between them.

To be an inhabitant of so splendid a city, and not render herself conspicuous in the annals of fashion, was not to be endured: and Mrs. Sherwel's *balls*, and Mrs. Sherwel's *routs*, were considered as the very acmè of taste and elegance; whilst she herself imagined she had done nothing, where so much remained to be done, in order to excite the wonder and astonishment of the public. She therefore now determined, as the season was tolerably advanced, and the place abounding with company, to once more open her doors to her friends, outdo all which she had hitherto done, and surprise the world by the fertility of her fancy.

The entertainment which she now meditated as a *coup-de-grâce*, was designed to consist of a variety of amusements, in which herself and daughter were constituted to bear their several

parts. One room she had ordered to be tastefully decorated for dancing: at the upper end of which, was constructed a lovely bower, formed of evergreens, enlivened with artificial flowers, and denominated by elegant scrolls, entwined amid the blushing foliage, "*Elizabeth's Bower.*" In this delicious retreat it was intended that Miss Sherwel should take her station; and from which she was to emerge, in order to open the ball with one, of the many, sighing swains, who would be desirous of leading her forth on such an occasion. Another apartment was designed for music, in which the graceful harp stood conspicuous to aid *Elizabeth* in the exhibition of her elegant figure; whilst a third was furnished with card-tables, for the amusement of the more sedate; and the lower part of the house was plenteously stored with every delicate refreshment.

Her arrangements at length completed entirely to her own satisfaction, cards

were issued accordingly, and "*Mrs. Sherwel at Home*," decorated many a Bath drawing-room. A card of course found its way to Mrs. Addison, including the whole of the party in the superscription, who felt very little inclination to accept the invitation; but as no answer was required, she did not make it a subject of debate for the present, thinking it time enough to determine within a day or two of the time specified.

Nothing was now talked of in the upper circles but the splendid preparations going forward for Mrs. Sherwel's approaching entertainment; and each was eager to procure for themselves cards of invitation. Amongst the most eager were Medora and Eliza, who, fearful they should not be able to prevail on Mrs. Addison to enter into so large an assembly, enlisted Miss Dalton as an auxiliary on their side, begging her to use all her influence in their favour. Ever ready to oblige, this lady very wil-

lingly undertook the task of persuasion, at the same time begging they might make one party; and so far did she succeed in her arguments, that Mrs. Addison was at length induced to promise compliance with her intreaties to accompany her.

Time, in his unaltered progress, soon brought forward the desired evening; when every-body—or to use a more fashionable phrase—all the world would be gratified. Mrs. Addison, from her extreme dislike to mixing in large parties, had ordered their chairs very early, and when they arrived found themselves almost the first in the room. Mrs. Sherwel, and her daughter, who had not yet taken her station in the "*bower*," eagerly came forward to receive them, as they wished to communicate a plan which Mrs. Sherwel had conceived of a Polish dance, before the rest of the company assembled. In this dance, as both the young ladies waltzed delightfully, Mrs.

Sherwel wished them to exhibit, believing that by adding two such lovely girls to those she had selected, her dance would go off with the greater *eclat;* assuring them therefore that the figure was very easy, entirely her own fancying, and would be acquired by them in a few seconds, she proceeded to detail the evolutions. "You will appear to such superior advantage, my loves," added she, "particularly Miss Addison, whose sylph-like person will so superlatively correspond with the figure of the dance; I am sure you will both be immeasurably delighted!"

Medora, scarcely knowing how to answer this complimentary speech, directed her eyes towards her mother; when Mrs. Addison, seeing the earnestness of the appeal, and believing that nothing improper could take place beneath a respectable roof, was too polite to give a negative to the request; and she therefore desired that Medora would do her

best to comply with the desire of her friends.

Eliza, who, during this dialogue had stood brimful of curiosity and expectation, pressed the arm of her friend in triumph, whilst her eyes danced, and her face flushed with pleasure at being permitted to make one of the gay party in the frolic scene; whilst Medora's arch smile, and expressive look, were not lost upon her mother and Miss Dalton.

"What scheme can this good lady have now in agitation," whispered Miss Dalton to her friend, "I hope nothing that will render her ridiculous. But her wild ungovernable fancy, or, as she terms it, *genius*, frequently, like a turbid cataract, which sends forth only an ebullition of froth to bespatter its beholders, produces nothing but vagaries, in which many of the actors are covered with confusion. But this I hope will not now be the case; as the young people selected to perform, can have no other motive

than to oblige, and must therefore escape all censure.

This observation in some measure tended to console Mrs. Addison, who was beginning to repent her too easy compliance with the scheme in question; when the reverberation of the knocker, which now resounded through the house with great rapidity, announced an influx of company. Willing to procure seats they immediately took possession of those at the lower end of the room, and Elizabeth retired to her *bower*.

CHAPTER VII.

The party had not long occupied their chosen seats, ere they recognised in the crowd of company just entered Miss Lawford and her constant attendant Moncil; who, as usual, seemed reconnoitering the company, in order to indulge his ill-natured criticisms. In their promenade up and down the room this delectable couple encountered Mrs. Macgormin, whom Moncil always considered as fair game for his satirical remarks; and surveying her from head to foot through his levelled glass, he conveyed his giggling remarks into the ear of his attentive companion. Mrs. Macgormin, whose costume never failed to afford a subject of conversation for the gossiping Moncil, was this evening splendidly attired

in a silver gauze; and in open defiance of his former sarcastic assertions respecting her short petticoats, they to-night very decently concealed her ankles. Disappointed in his general theme of spiteful animadversion, he was now as eager to detail what he called the wonder of the evening; namely, that Mrs. Macgormin, for once, sported *long* petticoats.

At length, making the circuit of the room, Miss Lawford beheld Miss Dalton and her party; and as youth and beauty possessed attractions for Moncil in common with others, he was not long in making his way up to them. Scarcely had an exchange of compliments passed between the ladies, ere three or four fashionable young men, envious of Moncil's good fortune, in being upon terms of apparent intimacy with two such elegant looking girls as Medora and her friend, joined them.

"Ha! my fine fellow," exclaimed a young Irish captain, shaking Moncil by

the hand, "you are always in luck, faith, I should like to be after knowing what divinities you have got there now?"

"Oh! goddesses too high for your contemplation, my friend," replied Moncil, "but if you are seeking for divinities, why not turn your eyes to the enchanting bower, yonder?"

"What, to the lonely turtle, cooing in her nest?" replied he, "no, no, I leave that for my friend, Sir Philip, here," turning to one of his companions, "he has got a kind compassionate heart of his own, which is always leading him to pity and assist distressed damsels."

"Speak for yourself, my good friend," returned Sir Phillip, "and don't overrate my good qualities; for I protest the dove must continue to nestle in her splendid foliage for me."

"Well then, Evelyn, do you volunteer in her service," continued the lively Macready, addressing himself to another of the group.

" Excuse me, my good sir," replied Evelyn, " the soft enchantress is vastly above my pretensions, plebeian as I am; nothing less than a title or a commission can hope to succeed; so, gentlemen, I leave it to you to dispute the honour."

" Och! you couple of spalpeens," vociferated Macready, " by the bright eyes of my grandmother, but she shall not be left sighing there any longer; for if Moncil won't have the charity to introduce me to one of his divinities, I can't have the heart to lave the dear cratur alone, now, can I?"

" Off, my good fellow, off!" cried Moncil, laughing at his rhapsody, " for it is certain you will not succeed here; and I advise you to be expeditious, or the prize may be carried before you arrive."

A staunch votary of fun and frolic, Macready cared not what lengths he went to gratify his favourite propensities, provided that by indulging them he

created pain to no one; for his heart was too generous and compassionate to wound the sensibility of a human being. Very early in life he had entered the army under the auspices of some veteran officers, and from the goodness of his disposition, and natural *gaieté-de-cœur*, had become the pet of the whole regiment. His lively sallies, which he ever had in readiness, were sure to create a laugh, the monkey-tricks with which he abounded, were certain to be applauded, and his sprightly and handsome exterior was a letter of recommendation to all.

A young man of the above description, could not fail to prove a pleasing acquisition to the circle which surrounded the *bower*, and which was certainly not an extensive one; for Mrs. Sherwel ought to have remembered that it was rather too late in the day, for her daughter to act the Paphian Queen; the Loves flew affrighted from the impostor, and Hy-

men endeavoured in vain to illuminate his torch, at her once brilliant eyes.

Macready was most graciously received by Elizabeth; and as the festivities of the night only awaited her being led forth as the mistress of the revels, she, with her elegant partner, immediately commenced the dance.

Moncil of course had engaged himself to Miss Lawford, and after the departure of the volatile Macready, Sir Philip Mordaunt, and his friend Evelyn, made sufficient interest with Moncil to get themselves introduced to the two young friends, whom they led off in triumph, to take their stations in the animated set.

Miss Dalton now seldom danced. Although not arrived at an age which could with propriety be called *old*, yet she no longer possessed the airy sylph-like figure, so necessary to give grace in this attractive amusement; and wisely considering, that a woman after thirty,

loses so much by comparison with one of eighteen in this exercise, she generally declined the competition : and this evening, she had engaged to devote herself to Mrs. Addison.

The dance, once commenced, went merrily on, every one appearing in high spirits; and Miss Sherwel, who was quite *in alto* with her lively partner, exerted herself to the utmost; and had those who beheld her some "*Twenty Years Ago*" figuring away as the distinguished pupil of D'Egville, seen her now, they might, from the precision of her steps, have recognised the elegant dancer; but alas! Time had marked her with his iron hand, and the loveliness of youth, so necessary a concomitant with the graces of a dancer, was fled—and Elizabeth now danced in vain.

As variety is allowed to give a zest to every pleasure, Mrs. Sherwel determined that the whimsical goddess should preside in her mansion for the night. As

soon therefore as the two preceding dances were finished, the company were summoned to the concert-room. Here an excellent band awaited their entrance to perform some select pieces, after which, many individuals of the party were entreated to contribute, Miss Sherwel herself setting the example, by executing a sonata on the harp. This musical treat was a source of great pleasure to Mrs. Addison, whose soul was music's self, and who in her turn, when solicited, could not refuse to accompany her daughter in a duet; which, from their superior taste, and style of execution, electrified their hearers. Medora was afterwards intreated to favour the company with a song; unwilling to refuse, though scarcely able to comply, being unaccustomed to sing before so large an assembly; she however made choice of a simple ballad, and again thrilled the hearts of her auditors by the sweetness and pathos of her execution. Sir Philip Mor-

daunt, who was one of Apollo's most ardent votaries, hung over the sweet songstress, enamoured of her tones; the dulcet sounds had struck to his heart; they lingered in his ears, and rendered her doubly alluring to his senses; and it was with the greatest regret that he relinquished her hand to the gay Macready, who had won upon Moncil to introduce him to Medora for the two next dances.

With Medora's song concluded the concert, as no lady had the temerity either to sing or play after two such exquisite performers; and Mrs. Sherwel was also too great a Machiavel to permit the agreeable impression to remain too long upon the minds of her guests; she therefore immediately ordered the musicians back into the ball-room, from whence a sprightly tune soon called them to resume their joyous amusement.

Dancing again concluded, the active hostess led the way to the supper-rooms below. Here, every luxurious delicacy,

either in or out of season, which could provoke, or gratify the appetite, was spread upon the hospitable board; whilst the goddess of mirth, joy, and hilarity presided over the festive scene.

The company had been given to understand, that an entertainment of a perfectly *nouvelle* nature awaited them, after supper, in the ball-room; and which was expected to finish the festivities of the night with great *eclat*. Eagerly therefore did the whole party now crowd to the destined spot, in order to witness, or to take a part in this fresh scene of gaiety. Here, they had not waited long, before Mrs. Sherwel entered, followed by several servants, each bearing a tray of elegant lighted bougies, which they placed upon a marble slab and withdrew. Those not in the secret, now whisperingly conveyed their wonder to each other, as to what could be going forward; whilst the initiated were some of them preparing to act their parts with fear and trem-

bling; whilst others exulted in the coming frolic. But little time was suffered to elapse, ere the musicians were again ordered to their posts, and the signal passing from Mrs. Sherwel to her daughter, she begged a gentleman to order aloud the "*New Polish Dance!*"

Instantly about twenty select ladies were led from their seats by as many chosen gentlemen (who had been allowed to make choice of their own partners) and conducted to the marble slab, from whence each gentleman took a couple of these bougies, and presented to his partner one for each hand, then supporting her by passing one arm round her waist, they moved off to a waltz tune, following each other in succession round the room.

"Well, I declare it is vastly pretty," said a lady to Mrs. Sherwel, who stood anxiously watching this whim of her own brain; "and then the lighted tapers make the ladies' dresses look so brilliant," she continued.

"To be sure they do," returned Mrs. Sherwel; "but this is nothing to what you will see, my dear Madam, when they waltz the figure down stairs and up again."

"Down stairs and up again! did you say, my dear Madam?" questioned she with astonishment; "you don't mean to say that the ladies will literally *dance* down stairs and up again, in that attitude?"

"Oh, indeed, but I do; it is perfectly easy, as you will see, presently. Dear! what a delightful contour was that!" she rapturously exclaimed, as the party now wheeled round the room; "excuse me, dear Madam, I must positively attend to the movements of the dance;" and off she flew to the other side in an instant.

The evolutions round the room had been properly gone through, and Mrs. Sherwel in extasies repeated her directions for their movements down stairs, when some of the ladies evinced a little

timidity upon the occasion; but, reassured by their partners, who promised them sufficient support, and who liked the fun too well to suffer them to give in before it was finished, they again moved forward. All went well, and Mrs. Sherwel was in raptures with her happy conceit, till Miss Lawford, supported by Moncil, had reached about half-way down the staircase; here she unfortunately made a premature caper, quite out of tune, down the next step, before the lady who preceded her had cleared it, and, stamping upon her dress, prevented her from getting forward, whilst her partner, by this, in losing his equilibrium, lost the power to support her, and she fell flat on her face. Miss Lawford, in her turn, being pressed upon by those behind her, unluckily fell sprawling over the prostrate Mrs. Macgormin; for it was her unfortunate *long* petticoats, and Miss Lawford's want of ear, that had occasioned all the mischief. In a mo-

ment the silver gauze was in a blaze, and the terrifying shriek of fire resounded through the apartments. All was now horror, tumult, and confusion; and how poor Mrs. Macgormin might have suffered from such an accident it is impossible to say, had not Macready, who climbed like a cat, in a second ascended the bannisters, and snatching her up in his arms, there pressed her tight till he had extinguished the flames; vowing, that "to his way of thinking, the lady had better be hugged to death, than lose her life in a *blaze*."

Thus finished, almost tragically, this splendid evening; and it long remained a doubt in the mind of Moncil, whether it had not been better for poor Mrs. Macgormin still to have sported her *short* petticoats.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE unfortunate termination of the "*New Polish Dance*" proved a theme for conversation the next and several days afterwards. Many averred that it was occasioned by Miss Lawford's aukwardness; many, that poor Mrs. Macgormin's shortness of stature had prevented her from getting forward in time, whilst others united in ridiculing the whole as an absurd and wild vagary of Mrs. Sherwel's, to lead people into danger: at the same time thanking their stars that they had nothing to do with it. Mrs. Addison felt as if she also would have been glad to have said the same thing in regard to Medora, although, thanks to Sir Philip Mordaunt, who had borne her with rapidity through the crowd, she had

escaped unhurt. But the horror of the moment till she beheld her in safety, had almost been too much for the parent; and bitterly did she repent yielding her too easy acquiescence to so extravagant a plan.

It was late ere the revels of the preceding evening had concluded, consequently our young friends were rather tardy in throwing off the fetters of Morpheus the next morning; and they had scarcely made their appearance in the breakfast room, when Miss Dalton was announced, who came, by appointment, to accompany them to the Pump-room.

On entering they observed the room unusually full of company; a continual buzz seemed to prevail from one end to the other; and as they walked up and down, their ears were saluted with the following disjointed sentences:—

"Have you heard of the dreadful conflagration of last night?"

"Oh, I was a spectator of the scene."

"Dear, how melancholy!—wasn't it terrible?—and poor Mrs. Macgormin is most shockingly scorched, I understand—but it was all her own fault."

"Her fault! oh, no, poor thing, every one knows whose fault it was, and many believe it was maliciously done—but I say nothing."

These, with a thousand other surmises, all equally vague and absurd, were bandied about the room, whilst Miss Dalton and the two young friends, tired of the repetition, took a seat with the intention of attending to a piece of music which the band was then preparing to commence.

The weather being rather cold, the three ladies had stationed themselves near one of the fires, where they had not sat long, before they perceived themselves the principal objects of attention to an elderly gentleman placed on the seat immediately opposite. His eyes,

which were particularly keen and piercing, seemed almost to possess the power of the basilisk; and the party felt inclined to shrink beneath the fascination of their vivid glances. The person of this stranger, which was tall and well-formed, appeared enfeebled more by sickness than by age, and his features bore the remains of Nature's best stamp; but, there was a quickness in the expression of his eyes, and an agitation in his manner, which, scarcely permitting him to sit still, denoted a mind ill at ease; and he in his turn became an object of attention to those he had been so deeply scrutinizing.

The piece now began; and Medora, for whom music always possessed peculiar charms, gave her undivided attention to the orchestra; and for a time her opposite neighbour was forgotten. Not so he, who, on his part, only found a fairer opportunity of continuing his observations.

The piece was just concluding, when they beheld Sir Philip Mordaunt Evelyn and Macready approaching. These gentlemen had been to pay their morning compliments to the trio, but not finding them at home, had followed their steps to the Pump-room, whither they had been directed by Mrs. Addison. They now took their seats by the ladies, and chatted away with great volubility on the occurrences of the preceding evening, when Medora again returned her acknowledgments to Sir Philip, for his assiduous attention in rescuing her from the disagreeable effects she might otherwise have experienced in the crowd.

"Och! my dear madam, don't be after wasting your precious breath upon the fellow for that," exclaimed Macready, "he only performed his duty."

"*You*, Captain Macready," said Miss Dalton, "ought to have the thanks of the ladies voted you in a body, for the services you rendered them; had it not

been for your extraordinary and prompt exertions in their favour, the consequences might have been alarming."

"Oh! nothing at all, at all!" shouted the animated Macready, "who is there amongst us that would not go through fire, water, smoke, and all the combustible elements put together in the sarvice of the dear craturs?"

During this short dialogúe, the eyes of the stranger had never been removed from the party, and so exclusively did he bestow his attention upon them, that in the opinion of the quick-sighted Macready, it amounted to rudeness, and he whisperingly exclaimed—"By the bright eyes of my grandmother, but one of you ladies must certainly have captivated the old hero opposite. By the mass if he was to regard any one that I had a *penchant* for, but half so lovingly, I should be tempted to run the old buck through the body, by way of example to the rest of his fraternity."

"Fie! Captain Macready," said Eliza, "how can you talk so extravagantly, the gentleman is at liberty to look where he pleases."

Just at this instant a large stick, on which the stranger had been leaning, slipped from beneath his hands, and fell at Medora's feet, when she, quick as lightning, picked it up, and, with a look of benevolent sweetness, presented it to its owner.

"Thank you, my lovely girl," he exclaimed, "it gives me pleasure to find, that the heart which prompts you to afford assistance to an enfeebled old man, corresponds with that lovely countenance."

The party now rose, and Medora, blushing at the compliment she had just received, curtesied and proceeded to join them; when she did not escape the raillery of Macready upon the importance of her conquest.

"The conduct of the gentleman cer-

tainly appears rather particular," said Miss Dalton, "but one is in the habit of seeing so many eccentric characters in a place like this, that it ceases to be any thing extraordinary."

Upon their arrival at home, they did not fail to detail the circumstance of the gentleman's singular behaviour to Mrs. Addison. She was rather startled by this account, and contrary to their expectation, she expressed a decided wish to behold him herself. The next morning therefore, when the young people were equipping for their walk, she proposed to accompany them; and on entering the Pump-room, they saw their new acquaintance occupying the same seat near the fire, which he had done the day before; and that it might not have the appearance of exciting his attention by approaching him abruptly, they continued to walk for some time up and down the room.

At length, observing the seat opposite

the being whom Mrs. Addison wished to contemplate, vacated, she with the young friends took possession of it, and was not long in perceiving from the cast of his countenance the pleasure he experienced at again beholding them. A bow of recognition immediately passed, which proved only a prelude to a desultory conversation with Medora, during which he still continued to regard her with the greatest degree of interest.

Mrs. Addison, who neither raised her veil, nor joined in the conversation, had sufficient opportunity to make her observations. It was certainly a countenance she had never seen before, yet it possessed traits that spoke to her very soul; every feature reminded her of something once familiar to her heart, and it was with infinite pleasure she contemplated the favourable impression which her daughter appeared to have made upon this interesting stranger.

An acquaintance formed upon so slen-

der a foundation as an accidental *rencontre*, is seldom expected to boast much durability; this, however, contrary to the general axiom, proved an exception. Every time the parties met, their approbation and esteem of each other continued to increase, and scarcely a day elapsed without their meeting in some of the public places of resort. Frequently did the supporting arm of Medora lend its aid, to sustain the enfeebled frame of her friend; and although the intimacy subsisting between them would have warranted the inquiry, and the band of friendship seemed to be daily uniting them closer, still she knew not his name, who he was, nor whither he came. He had, early in their acquaintance, learned her appellation, and frequently addressed her by it, but he never disclosed his own; wishing, it might be supposed, rather to owe the attentions which he experienced from the lovely girl, to her own goodness of heart, that could thus induce her to

be civil to an old man, than to any adventitious aids of fortune or of birth, with which he might be able to interest her.

Mrs. Addison did not remain ignorant of the increasing intimacy between her daughter and this gentleman; and whilst Medora was secure of her mother's sanction, she never questioned the singularity of her thus forming an acquaintance with a perfect stranger. His conversation and manners wore so pleasing an aspect, and she felt such self-satisfaction when enabled to offer him any little kindness, that an attachment insensibly sprung up between them, producing on her side, the satisfaction she would have experienced, in bestowing her attentions upon a well-beloved parent.

Things were in this state, when Mrs. Addison was surprised one morning by receiving a visit from Mrs. Sherwel, much earlier than the usual time appointed for visits of ceremony. She

came, she said, on a mendicant errand, to entreat that she, with the two young ladies, would join her in a pleasurable scheme which she had in agitation for the ensuing week, and make three in a party to Bristol and the Hot-wells.

Seeing Mrs. Addison inclined to demur upon the practicability of this scheme, Mrs. Sherwel alleged that she could have no serious objection, as the spring was so far advanced, and the weather so lovely, adding—"My dear madam, consider how delightful it will be to spend a day at Clifton, now it is beginning to be robed in all its beauty; and how enchanting to wander beneath the stupendous rock, which dazzles but to behold its pinnacle! Besides, to quit Bath without seeing such a sight, which I understand you have not yet done, would be horrid, and I am sure you would not refuse your daughter and Miss Johnston so pure a gratification."

Borne down by her volubility, Mrs.

Addison scarcely knew what to answer. It had always been her wish and intention to pay a visit to Saint Vincent's Rock ere she again returned to D——; but it would have suited her inclination much better to have proceeded thither quietly with her own select friends, rather than with so large a party. But as she conceived herself in some measure indebted to Mrs. Sherwel for the handsome entertainment she had accepted at her hands, and she was so very pressing in her intreaties, Mrs. Addison could not refuse to comply with her request; and the gratified lady took her leave, promising to acquaint them early with the appointed day.

CHAPTER IX.

Pleasure! enchanting goddess! ever on the wing, ever in pursuit of new delights! yet, how frequently does it happen, that you soar too high to obtain the gratification you desire, and the chief enjoyment lies in the anticipation.

The projected jaunt to the Hot-wells now occupied every mind, and many of the party looked forward with impatience to the day which should accomplish their desires, by conducting them to the wished-for spot. Eliza, whose ardent spirits led her to enjoy every novelty, was delighted with the project; and Medora, who loved to contemplate great Nature's beauties, felt equally elated with her friend, at the prospect of viewing different scenes; for—

"Presented to her cultur'd eye of taste,
No rock was barren, and no wild was waste."

At length, a note from the indefatigable Mrs. Sherwel announced, that all was arranged, and the party would assemble at her house on Tuesday morning; whither she requested they would repair early, as she had settled the mode of travelling, she hoped, to the satisfaction of all parties.

The finger of the dial, placed on Mrs. Addison's chimney-piece, scarcely pointed to the hour of nine, ere the breakfast was concluded, and the party on the wing for Rivers-street, where Mrs. Sherwel resided. On their arrival they beheld several carriages of different descriptions already lining the street, and a large party assembled in the drawing-room.

"I am rejoiced to see you," exclaimed Mrs. Sherwel, advancing and offering a hand to each as they entered, "we have only waited for the pleasure of your arrival to commence our equestrian expedition."

"Who will have the courage to venture their necks in my tandem, besides Miss Sherwel?" inquired Macready, "she does me the honour to place faith in my skill as a whip; but as there is plenty of room, I must positively have another lady."

"Oh dear!" drawled Miss Lawford, "I wouldn't venture into a tandem for worlds—a curricle," glancing at Moncil, "is the only open carriage in which I dare trust myself."

"By Saint Patrick," cried Macready, "I won't stir till I have another dear crature to grace my vehicle," advancing towards Mrs. Addison, and looking full at Medora, when observing Sir Philip Mordaunt bending his steps the same way, he turned to Eliza and exclaimed, "Miss Johnston is not afraid, I think, to trust herself with such a rattle-brain, when I assure her that I will conduct her in perfect safety?"

"Not at all," replied Eliza, whose mode of education had too much accustomed her to animals, to have any idle or fantastic fears; and giving her hand to Macready, they, with Miss Sherwel tripped down stairs, and seating themselves in the carriage, were the first to lead the way on the road to Bristol.

Macready having set the example, the rest of the party were not slow to follow it; and the carriages soon whirled from the door in the following succession. Mrs. Sherwel had accommodated Mrs. Addison and some other ladies in her own coach, Sir Philip Mordaunt had begged to drive Medora and Miss Dalton in his curricle, and Miss Lawford with the ever attentive Moncil brought up the rear.

The morning was lovely, and its exhilarating influence was sensibly felt by the whole party, who in high glee reached the object of their destination. Alight-

ing at the Wells, the carriages were ordered round to Clifton, there to await the return of their owners, as the party intended to take a ramble under the rock; and then by climbing its acclivity obtain a view of the Welsh coast, and return by the Down.

Having regaled themselves with refreshments at the Wells, tasted the waters, and inscribed their names in the public book, they proceeded to view the Rock; which bursting at once upon the sight from this spot, awes the beholder with its sublimity.

For some time the party stood wrapped in astonishment, at the grandeur of the scene which presented itself, and gazed in silent ecstasy upon the prospect before them. What appeared to have been in primeval ages an immense mass of stone, was now cleft asunder to admit the course of the Avon, who, in a capacious bed, rolled his blue waves towards

the sea. On one side, the precipice was richly clothed with trees, now putting forth their leaves of various dye, amidst masses of barren stone; which, peeping irregularly here and there, formed a striking contrast to the rich foliage with which they intermingled. The opposite cliff presented a perpendicular mass of naked stone; some parts smooth, and even polished; others rugged with every variety of colouring, and of such towering height that the eye ached, and the head became giddy, by beholding its ivy-crowned summits.

Satisfied at length with gazing on this superb scene, they proceeded to perambulate the river's bank, from the windings of which they were every moment presented with varied prospects, containing new objects of wonder, and new beauties to admire: when suddenly their attention was arrested by the glittering sparry pieces which, falling from the

rock, scattered the path before them. Each had now discovered a new pursuit, and each alike desirous to collect the handsomest specimens, was soon divided from his companion. In all directions they were now seen scrambling up and down the different projections of the Rock in search of this newly discovered treasure, except Medora; who carelessly wandered along the margin of the river, contemplating the sublime scene before her with increased delight.

Sometimes proceeding onwards, at others taking a retrospecive view of the beauties she had passed, she was struck on a sudden by the singular appearance of a man who was following them. He appeared to be young, and although not clothed in the garb of a gentleman, still there was a semblance of cleanliness and decency. Of his features, she was not able to form an opinion, as he was yet too far distant for her to distinguish them; but his being occupied by a va-

riety of antics by way of amusement, such as, jumping, running, flinging pieces of the rock before him, and then laughing violently at his own extravagance, denoted strong signs of imbecility of mind, if not derangement; but as Medora had never been encouraged to feed her sensibility with imaginary fears and sickly terrors, she was not alarmed herself, nor did she create alarm by pointing him out as an object to be dreaded by others.

In a short time, the subject of her observation gained the spot where the rest of the party were busily employed in prosecuting their search; and the stones, with which he amused himself by flinging before him, came rattling with the rapidity of lightning over their heads. Startled at such a salutation, they hastily looked up to see from whence the shower had proceeded, and beheld the delinquent before them. For a moment he regarded them all stedfastly, then laugh-

ed, apparently delighted at what he had done; till suddenly turning his eyes upon Mrs. Sherwel, his laugh ceased, he looked displeased, made mouths at her, and then skipped off with velocity. The next moment he reached Medora, who had preceded the rest of the party a few yards, when he again stopped, and after looking at her very attentively, smiled, nodded, and smiled again; when seeing Sir Philip Mordaunt approaching her, he immediately ran off; and darting into one of the paths which winds up the acclivity, was out of sight in an instant.

"He is certainly a madman!" screamed Mrs. Sherwel, "I protest I should be in fear for my life, but that we are so well protected," looking at the gentlemen.

"I should rather think he is some poor imbecile creature that is perfectly harmless," said Sir Philip, "but as we are not likely to see any thing more of him, don't let his remembrance even

disturb our present tranquillity." To this advice, after expressing their separate ideas on the subject, every one thought proper to conform; and the *madman* was forgotten.

The ramble again commenced in all its freedom. Some indulged in one pursuit, some in another. The prospect at every step continued to delight, the glittering fragments to attract, and the opening flowers of spring, in some parts, where the Rock admitted of vegetation, to interest; till some of the party, who possessed more carnal appetites than could be satisfied with camelion food, began to feel an inclination for dinner; and having a tolerable long walk, before they could reach Clifton, now made a motion to begin their arduous ascent up the Rock.

A narrow green path, shaded on each side by the light branches of some stinted trees, which grew here in spite of the sterility of the soil, presented itself; and

which, they were given to understand from a passer-by, would conduct them through a cleft in the Rock up to Durdham Down. This path then, they began to ascend; but, from its almost perpendicular height, several of the ladies were so much fatigued, that, without support from the gentlemen, they found it impossible to proceed. Medora, who had refused all assistance from Sir Philip Mordaunt, conceiving that her mother required his support more than herself, mounted with Eliza quite at her ease; sometimes stopping to gaze on the view below, which, as they ascended, every moment borrowed a new aspect, or to pluck a peeping flower, that shed its sweets amidst this wild of ruggedness.

Thus occupied they had loitered behind the rest of the party, when Eliza's attention was suddenly caught by a beautiful flower, to which she was quite a stranger; blossoming on an eminence a little above them; and which she pro-

ceeded to climb, in order to obtain it, leaving Medora to watch her motions from below. Eager after the object of her pursuit, she had just succeeded in severing it from its parent stem, when, alarmed by a scream of terror from her friend, the astonished girl suddenly turned, and, in turning, beheld Medora in the arms of the *madman!*

CHAPTER X.

Horror-struck at witnessing her beloved friend in so perilous a situation, the rocks reverberated with the cries of Eliza; and she proceeded as fast as her trembling limbs would permit to her assistance. Several of the party were by this time out of sight, and almost out of hearing; but the quick ears of a parent, ever alive to the welfare of her child, distinguished Medora's scream; and in an agony of terror, Mrs. Addison rushed back to discover the cause of it. This was a signal to others; and, with the rapidity of lightning, Sir Philip Mordaunt, alarmed by the agitation of Mrs. Addison, retraced his steps, in order to afford her every assistance; but, ere he arrived at the spot where Medora was

struggling in the grasp of the maniac, a deliverer, swift as the towering eagle, when he pounces on his prey, had darted to her rescue. With one arm the intrepid stranger whirled the maniac from his now almost unresisting victim, whilst with the other he supported the fainting girl, whom terror, at being so unceremoniously seized by so terrific an object, had deprived of life.

If alarm possessed the power of steeping the senses of Medora in forgetfulness, the effect of surprise was almost as fatal, when, in opening her lovely blue eyes, she beheld Augustus in her deliverer!—Augustus! whom she so little expected to see, and whose surprise almost equalled her own, whilst the various sensations that thrilled through his bosom, now shook those nerves to almost infantine weakness, which but a moment before were gifted with the strength of Hercules to combat in her favour.

Thus to behold again, the beloved of

his soul; to fold her to his heart! and oh! extatic idea, to have preserved her from the profane touch of a wretch like that! were reflections that afforded him infinite delight; and he regretted, when the remainder of the party arrived, that he could no longer indulge them.

Already grateful to Heaven for the liberation of her daughter, Mrs. Addison felt her debt of gratitude much enlarged when she discovered who was her preserver; and whilst she thought a fatality guided them thus towards each other, and she felt that she could have greeted him with maternal kindness, she recollected the necessity there still existed for restraint, and *commanded* herself to thank Augustus as she would have done any indifferent person.

Medora, still agitated and trembling, but whether most from the effects of alarm or surprise, we must leave, was scarce able to walk, when Augustus, with a speaking look of intreaty, peti-

tioned Mrs. Addison for the honour of assisting her up the hill. This the grateful mother could not refuse, although she recollected the cutting insinuations of Lord Ashdale; but this was neither time nor place to animadvert upon them, and again they pursued their walk.

As they moved slowly up the hill, Medora had an opportunity of scrutinizing the person of Augustus; and with infinite concern she remarked that he was become much thinner than when she saw him last. His cheek, then swelling with health's roseate bloom, was now sunk and almost colourless; whilst the heaviness of his once brilliant eye proved that all was not well within; and Medora, as she leaned upon his arm and listened to the plaintive tones of his voice, which appeared alike to have undergone a transformation, could not help expressing her concern, her doubts, and her fears, for his safety.

"And is Medora thus interested for me?" he asked, in a voice of delight.

"Happy Augustus! what more hast thou to desire?" when, seeing the quick blush of sensibility mantling on her cheek at the ardour of his exclamation, he suddenly checked the ebullition of his heart, and pressing the hand that rested on his arm, asked if he might inquire where they had resided since they left D——?

An explanation now ensued, when Medora learned from Augustus that his father had insisted upon taking him to Clifton, on the plea of establishing his health, although the heart-stricken youth had warmly protested that he had no malady for which Clifton could boast a remedy. He then added, "that since his residence here his chief amusement, when the weather permitted, was to ramble amongst these rocks till he was weary, and then to retire into some of the cavities, there unseen, to read or meditate on scenes gone by; in which employment he was happily engaged when her cries for assistance reached his ears, and en-

abled him to save her, on whom he doated, from violence and insult."

The walk over the down was a long one; but neither Augustus nor Medora wished it shorter. Each seemed to have much to say, yet nothing particular transpired from either that could have been understood by an indifferent person; so diffident is real affection. Augustus knew that with the termination of the walk his conversation with Medora must terminate also; for he could not intrude himself into her party; he therefore purposely loitered in order to prolong the time which they beguiled so sweetly, that, when the parting moment arrived they found it robbed of half its bitterness.

Augustus, with his parents, had spent a considerable time at Clifton; where, from the salubrity of the air, and its known efficacy in diseases where consumption is to be apprehended, they had hoped a speedy cure for their estimable

son; but Lord Ashdale, who watched him with the keen eye of once-awakened suspicion, was grieved still to remark that the disease dwelt in the mind; and that like all maladies which have their seat in the imagination, the most difficult to eradicate. Absence, he had flattered himself, would have effected a cure; but here he was disappointed; for, although Augustus had not seen the idol of his soul for many months, yet her image continued to occupy him as powerfully as if she were present, and to absorb his every faculty. A slave to all the doubts, fears, and nameless anxieties which constantly harass the lover's breast, he, as is usual in like cases, neither eat, drank, or slept. His animated and natural flow of spirits were gone beyond recal; and the only luxury he was capable of enjoying, was, to wander forth in quest of some lone haunt, the seat of melancholy and meditation, there to ruminate in secret o'er his woes!

How fatal might have been the effects of such unvaried hours of anxiety and wretchedness upon the debilitated frame of Augustus, 'tis impossible to say, had not Medora so unexpectedly made her appearance, when he had fearfully foreboded, he should behold her no more; and by so doing, worked a miracle in his favour. The blushing timidity with which she listened to him during their walk, first introduced hope into his despairing bosom; this almost created him a new being; and Augustus Falknor, without venturing to explore the depths of futurity, enjoyed the present moment with all the extasy of new found delight, and pronounced it happy.

The transition was nearly as great on the side of Medora. To have met Augustus again, whom she had regretted as a friend, or perhaps something more, for her sensations respecting him were scarcely definable to herself, in any shape, would have afforded her infinite

pleasure; but to meet him again in so striking a situation, to be a second time indebted to him for so signal a service, carried with it that air of romance so congenial to young minds, which could not fail to make an indelible impression upon hers; an impression which the succeeding conversation of Augustus and his insinuating attentions were not likely to efface; and Medora, like the stricken deer, bore the barbed arrow in her bosom, which was destined to make or mar her future felicity.

The party again united, a recapitulation of events took place, when a hundred questions were asked in a breath, as to the hows, whys, and wherefores, respecting the disagreeable occurrence that had befallen Medora, as none seemed able to comprehend how it could have happened, after the perpetrator of it had remained so long invisible.

"Did I not prognosticate that the horrific creature would be guilty of some

mischief or other towards us?" cried Mrs. Sherwel; "I saw in a moment, by the elvish turn of his eye, how much he was to be dreaded; and I really would not have encountered him alone, for the wealth of the Indies."

"His '*eye*' was not deficient, at all events, in distinguishing lovely objects," rejoined Moncil.

"No, faith, the deficiency rests on our own shoulders," replied Macready, "in leaving so lovely an object unguarded. By the bright eyes of my grandmother, had I myself, now, met such a treasure in such a spot, I might have been tempted to turn freebooter, and seize it, as this spalpeen did, *sans ceremonie*."

"Aye, and have met with as rough a handling for your reward," said Sir Philip; "Miss Addison met with a noble champion in her defence, I assure you."

Here Medora's confusion became extreme; Sir Philip had touched a chord that vibrated painfully; and she coloured

whilst she attempted to articulate something of former acquaintance, old friendship, &c. By this and the preceding circumstances Sir Philip had gathered enough to know, that this old acquaintance was not sufficiently indifferent to the fair object who had half enslaved his heart, for him to have much confidence in his own success; and mortified at the discovery, his chagrin became visible to all.

The elastic spring of gaiety which had hitherto prevailed throughout the party, now seemed broken. Medora was lost in meditation; her mother became serious and reflective; Sir Philip spiritless; and the rest too much fatigued to exert themselves. Thus, what was begun in the height of hilarity, terminated in weariness, disappointment, and sorrowing regret.

CHAPTER XI.

The *rencontre* with Augustus Falknor at Clifton, so totally unexpected by Mrs. Addison, and as totally undesired on her part, had a good deal deranged that composure which she had been solicitous to acquire since she had quitted D——.

The meeting between the young people she foresaw would be productive of equal satisfaction to both; and she equally dreaded the consequences that might result from it. She feared for the future peace of Medora, and she also feared for the happiness of Augustus, if they were permitted to meet again; and that this would be accomplished was most probable, whilst they continued in the vicinity of each other. Mrs. Addison likewise recollected her promise to Lord Ashdale,

a promise voluntarily given, and which she now laboured under the apprehension of seeing broken, if she did not take the only effectual remedy to prevent it, that of immediately leaving Bath.

The resolution once formed, little was necessary to carry it into effect; and she hastened to inform the two girls of her determination, hoping to find in them that readiness of assent which she required, when given to understand that she meant to bend her course again towards D——.

Eliza received the communication with unfeigned delight. Though no one had more truly enjoyed the varieties which Bath affords for the gratification of the youthful mind than herself, still home had its superior charms; and to be able to return again to D—— in this delightful season, when kind Nature wore her loveliest hue, afforded her the highest satisfaction.

Medora, a short week since, would

have experienced the same delight, which now filled the heart of her friend, at the idea of returning to scenes, hallowed to her by the remembrance of Augustus; had not the unexpected meeting between them created new sensations in her breast. These sensations led her to reflect, that in quitting Bath, she should lose all chance of seeing him, and that he would remain too far distant, again to embellish the country for her. Sighing as these melancholy ideas arose in her mind, she still however preserved sufficient command of herself, to express her ready compliance with the will of her parent.

Nought then remained for the trio, previous to the commencement of their journey, but to bid farewel to the *friends*; according to the general acceptation of the word, whom they had acquired during their residence here. Miss Dalton's and Medora's incognito, they reckoned exceptions to the general term, and felt that to part with them, would occasion

real symptoms of regret. The former, with her sister, the amiable but still pensive Mrs. Warren, they tried to lure back to their former habitation in the vicinity of D——; and with the existing hope of one day meeting again, and that day perhaps not far distant, these amiable women separated with the most grateful remembrance of each other.

It was with the utmost concern, that Medora's Pump-room friend learned their intention of so soon quitting Bath; and in a tone, tremulous from agitation, he assured her, it would retain but few attractions for him when she was absent. "It is true," added he, "that my health has been benefited in some measure since my residence here, but I attribute the amendment more to the effect which your society, my lovely girl, has had upon my spirits, than to all the medicinal qualities of these far famed springs. Now, bereft of that," continued he,

whilst a tear that seemed a stranger, twinkled in his eye, "I shall get into my old moping, melancholy way again, and return home no better than I came."

Medora, affected by the regret he professed to feel for her departure, and commiserating his situation as he described it, endeavoured to comfort him all in her power; and after expressing her sincere wishes for his health and happiness, and assuring him of her most cordial remembrance and regard, she reluctantly prepared to take her leave.

"Sweet blossom!" he murmured in an under tone, "would that I could claim you for my own; then I should not stand alone in the world, like a withered trunk bereft of all its branches." And taking her hand, with an affectionate pressure, he begged to be informed where she was going to reside, whilst he added that, although he was compelled to part with such friends at present,

he should be most miserable, if he conceived the separation would be an eternal one.

"Oh, my dear Medora!" cried Eliza, as soon as they were beyond hearing, "what a beau shall we have to present to my father and mother; for this affectionate old soul most certainly intends to do us the honour of a visit."

"Dear old man!" exclaimed Medora, her blue eyes glistening with the tear of sensibility, "there is a something which strongly attracts me towards thee, and I should feel sorry indeed if I fancied that we now parted to meet no more!"

Medora, whilst recounting to her mother, her interesting parting with the stranger, perceived that it created in her the liveliest emotions; and she again expressed the wish that had many times escaped her, that her parent had consented to an introduction. But Mrs. Addison repeated the plea she had fre-

quently urged, her dislike to strangers, and the subject was forgotten.

A lovely morning in the month of April, saw the travellers seated in a post-chaise on their road to D——. The reflections arising from such a coincidence of circumstances, were of the most painful nature to Mrs. Addison. The recollection of travelling upon a former occasion, to the place where she was again bending her steps, and where after her irreparable loss, she had found an asylum for herself and infant, and could not fail of creating emotions almost too powerful for her frame. In idea, she now traced back the time, when, rich in youth, health, peace of mind, and the affections of indulgent parents, she had not a wish ungratified. What a contrast did "*Twenty Years Ago*" present to the present period! Now, a parent herself—a deserted, or at least an *apparently* deserted wife—a stranger in a foreign country, and nothing to protect her, save the hu-

manity of strangers! "Oh!" she mentally exclaimed, as covering her face with her veil, she leaned back in the carriage, "my lot has been a severe one; but let me not murmur at the dispensations of Providence, whose decrees are always wisest, discreetest, best!"

This mental soliloquy restored her to some degree of tranquillity ere the carriage drove up to the inn where they had appointed to dine, and where also they expected to meet Mr. Johnston, who had promised to escort them the remainder of the way. On approaching the inn door, Eliza's quick eyes were the first to distinguish her father who was standing ready to receive them. In a moment the affectionate girl was in his arms; and so lively was the satisfaction she received, at being once more folded in a parent's embrace, that she did not observe a young man, who stood smiling at some distance behind, till he was pointed out to her by Medora, as their

former little companion, William Barnard.

The youth, since they saw him last, was evidently much increased in stature, and also much improved in appearance. The rustic *mauvaise-honte*, so disadvantageous, which then hung about him, was vanished; and Eliza, whilst she cordially welcomed him, acknowledged to herself, that even William, whose countenance she had once thought perfect, was capable of embellishment.

Greetings the most cordial soon took place between all parties, each rejoicing to behold again an old and esteemed friend; but in no sense was this mark of cordiality more visibly expressed than from Mrs. Addison to her former little *protegé*.

Such condescending marks of distinction, from a lady whom he held in the highest veneration, were extremely flattering to young Barnard; who had been induced as much from respect for Mrs.

Addison as good will towards the Johnstons to make this visit. Since he had quitted D——, and received the benefit of a superior education, his mind expanding with his person, had taught him the full value of those benefits received in his younger days, from the kindness and consideration of this amiable woman; and he now felt it incumbent upon him to evince his gratitude accordingly.

To the young ladies, the grateful youth felt himself attached by that link of unrestrained freedom, which ever binds us to the playmates of our early youth; independent of a glowing debt of gratitude which he owed for various acts of kindness and attention. Medora, from her extreme beauty, and gracefulness of person, he had ever been accustomed to look up to with a degree of awe, as to a being almost deserving adoration. But Eliza, whose cheerful good humour, buoyant spirits, and frequent attentions to his little wants, brought her more

upon a level with himself, he used to think he could love dearly, if he might be permitted to do so, and his former sentiments thrilled through his heart in full force, when he again beheld her.

No one had more sincerely rejoiced in the sudden elevation of the generous and exemplary Barnard than Mr. Johnston. And, when the family quitted D——, this benevolent man expressed a desire to see William, whenever his vacations permitted; and the youth, to whom the invitation proved too agreeable to be rejected, had arrived, a welcome visitor, the preceding evening at Kirkaldy-hall.

The pleasure these good people enjoyed in each other's society, gave a zest to the already prepared meal; whilst joy sparkled in the bright eyes of Eliza, at the agreeable addition they had experienced in the presence of William, and the pensiveness which had hitherto overshadowed the face of her friend, now

vanished under her *gaieté de cœur*, as the thick morning vapour is dispelled by the rays of the sun; and ere they arrived at home scarce a trace of the former existing gloom remained.

CHAPTER XII.

Returned again to her former avocations, in the peaceful retirement of Kirkaldy-hall, Mrs. Addison found full leisure for retrospection. Pursuing the train of reflections which had so forcibly taken possession of her mind, during her journey to D——; and combining some occurrences of her past life, with the recent circumstances of her present one, she felt convinced that what she had formerly done in her own behalf, respecting the loss of her property, she ought again to do, if she considered the welfare of her daughter. If the documents of her marriage ceremony could not be restored, Medora, she argued, must be deprived of her birthright, and for ever remain an alien to her father's family. For the

sake of her daughter then, she felt it doubly incumbent upon her to make another exertion, and she determined immediately to consult her friends, relative to a second application to the public.

From the light in which she now represented the subject, Mr. Johnston was soon convinced of the expediency of the measure: and a short time only elapsed before the public papers again announced the former "*Advertisement.*"

Few days had passed after this transaction, when one morning, as Mrs. Addison was sitting with the young people, pursuing their customary employments, they were suddenly startled by the sound of a carriage, which appeared to be driving, with great velocity, up the avenue. A sound, so very unusual, drew an exclamation of surprise from each; when William Barnard, desirous of gratifying their curiosity, was proceeding to reconnoitre, but was stopped in his progress, by hearing the voices of people approaching.

Already footsteps sounded on the old oaken staircase,—they ascend—the door is thrown open by Mr. Johnston—and Medora finds herself in the arms of her Bath *incognito!*

Surprised, and somewhat alarmed, at the familiarity of the salutation, the lovely girl was quickly retreating, when he eagerly exclaimed—

"Fly me not, sweet innocent, and good as lovely! too long have I been deprived of the happiness which your loved society would have afforded me, but the future shall compensate for the past, for never again will I lose sight of an object, now become doubly dear to my heart!"

"Poor man!" thought Medora, as she retired from him towards her mother; "the infirm state of his health has certainly deranged his intellects;" whilst Mrs. Addison, half fainting from surprise and agitation, had dropped into the nearest seat.

William, from the situation in which he beheld Mrs. Addison, and the familiar address of the stranger to Medora, judging that he could not with propriety remain a spectator of scenes, which perhaps ought not to admit of witnesses—immediately quitted the room. His movement was not lost upon Eliza; she observing the serious aspect things were beginning to wear, retreated also, and joining William in the garden, they continued to converse upon the unexpected occurrence, till she was again summoned up stairs.

Re-entering the room, a surprise of a different nature awaited her. On one side, between Mrs. Addison and Medora, was seated the *incognito*, who smiled upon each with infinite satisfaction, and whose hands he alternately pressed with great seeming affection betwixt his own: and opposite to them, her father and mother apparently listening to a family history.

No sooner did Medora witness her

appearance, than springing from her seat, she caught the hand of her friend, exclaiming—"Behold, dear Eliza, in this already esteemed friend, one, who gives me leave to love and venerate him as a parent, one who comes expressly to claim me as his *grand-daughter.*"

The astonishment of Eliza may be easily imagined, at discovering the new found relative, having never heard Medora mention any of her connections; but her surprise increased still more as she learned the particulars of this interesting meeting.

Lord Falknor, from his eldest son's having so peremptorily refused the match which had been so sedulously provided for him with Lady Anne Eastheath, could not help entertaining strong suspicions, that under this refusal, lurked cogent reasons for conduct so inscrutable. Indulging therefore the suspicions which had entered his mind, he became watchful and inquisitive; not even stopping

short in obtaining, what every man of honour holds himself bound to respect, the almost sacred contents of a correspondence. Arthur, during his stay in England, had several friends abroad with whom he kept up a literary intercourse; this his father knew, and more than one of these epistles had been intercepted. But from the contents of these, he gleaned only weak conceptions, and faint surmises; till the departure of Mr. Falknor for Sardinia. Immediately after that period, he was enabled to learn from a foreign packet addressed to him, the contents of which he had the meanness to purloin; that the *son*, in whom centred all his hopes, and for whose welfare he had been so sedulous to toil in the roads of ambition, had blasted all his high-raised expectations by forming an alliance for himself; and that, with the family of a person in *trade*, a *catholic*, and a *foreigner!*

By cautiously intercepting every let-

ter which arrived through that channel, Lord Falknor was at length *au-fait* of every circumstance respecting this disgraceful connection; and he had soon the horror of learning that this dreaded wife had been driven by the revolution which had shook her country to its basis, to seek for safety in his. So bitter was the rancour excited in his bosom against this innocent being, by her union with his son, that he determined, if possible, to prevent their ever meeting again; and in order to effect his purpose, he had placed spies in almost every seaport throughout England, to observe her landing, and watch her motions afterwards. In consequence of this arrangement, when Mrs. Falknor—whom my readers will recognize in the *ci-devant* Mrs. Addison—landed at Portsmouth in order to seek her husband, a confidential person, engaged for that purpose by Lord Falknor, soon discovered her; and being too well paid to lose sight of his game when

once startled, followed up the pursuit during her route to D——; when, owing to the upsetting of the chaise, he was enabled to seize a booty, which he conceived, by identifying the owner, would be of intrinsic value to his employer, and procure him a reward accordingly.

"Fortune favours me!" thought Lord Falknor, as he examined the contents of the trunk now spread open to his view, "this is beyond my expectation. By concealing these," he exclaimed, whilst the documents testifying the validity of the marriage ceremony of his son trembled in his grasp, "they can never proclaim this inauspicious union. And the child, which some of the *paraphernalia* here give me to understand is in existence, can never inherit my property; and I may still see my honours bloom again, according to my own mode of cultivation." So said, and so thought, Lord Falknor nearly "*Twenty Years Ago*;" but time, which

had not passed lightly o'er his brow since that period, had produced in him different thoughts, different desires, and very different sensations!

From the time in which Lord Falknor —Medora's *incognito* friend—worn down with disease, the effect of disappointment and corroding care, seeking the health-inspiring springs of Bath, had met her in the Pump-room, so strikingly lovely did she appear, so femininely sweet, that he could not help wishing that it had been permitted him to claim kindred with a creature of such perfection; one that, in his imagination, would amply compensate for the deprivation he had sustained. With these ideas impressed upon his mind, he had sorrowfully deplored their separation, and was already beginning to calculate the time, when by making a visit to D——, he might have the gratification of again beholding his young favourite; but ere this intention could be put into practice, his eye caught the

"*Advertisement*;" which by a second time so accurately describing the articles in his possession, opened his eyes to a most agreeable discovery, and hurried him on the wings of paternal affection, in order to clasp a suffering daughter, and her long neglected child, to his repentant bosom.

Tranquillity was scarcely restored to the agitated parties, ere the newly discovered relative, eager to insure their future welfare, and his own comfort, by making reparation for his past omissions, proposed that Medora with her mother, whom his lordship now found equal reason to love and admire, should immediately take up their residence in his mansion; adding, "It is large enough to accommodate us all, and with such a mistress to preside over my domestic arrangements, I may enjoy my few remaining years in comfort, and go down to the grave in peace."

To refuse compliance with a scheme,

which, even in contemplation, appeared to afford Lord Falknor so high a degree of satisfaction, these amiable women found impossible; and although the prospect of quitting, perhaps for ever, a situation rendered dear by local attachment, cost them deep regret, yet they hesitated not to yield an immediate assent to the proposal. A motive, in Mrs. Falknor's opinion, superior to all others, had prompted her ready acquiescence in this decision, that of evincing her duteous regard to the declining parent of her idolized Arthur; whom neither the lapse of time, absence, nor the many various accidents that life is heir to, could persuade of his non-existence. And although this was a subject, which she had not yet ventured to touch upon with his father, yet she flattered herself that, by infusing a portion of that vivifying spirit of hope, which had hitherto so ably sustained her, into his bosom, she should procure for him the return of that con-

fidence, the loss of which had so long baffled his repose.

Heavy was the heart of Eliza, as she witnessed the preparations which would divide her from the friend of her heart, and from her more than friend, her guide and monitress, as she was authorized to call Mrs. Falknor. Never had they been separated since the dawn of reason had enabled them to appreciate the amiable and endearing traits which constituted the disposition of each; and severe indeed was the stroke which would now sever their compact. Medora equally felt the poignancy of the parting; and whilst she wept the consequences of it herself, she endeavoured to console her friend with hopes of future meetings, and promises of everlasting remembrance. Nor was this all; the memory of Augustus at this trying moment, recurred upon her imagination with redoubled force; and the loved scenes which she had so often traced by his side, were alike re-

gretted, and deplored. For, alas! to retrace these inanimate witnesses of her partiality in his favour, was all that had remained, as an equivalent, for departed happiness!

At length the so much dreaded morning, destined to sever friends so long and so closely united, arrived. Numerous were the affectionate adieus which passed on all sides; and Lord Falknor, after expressing his gratitude to this estimable family in the most animated terms, for their hospitable care of those, he had himself so unfeelingly neglected, led the weeping pair to his carriage, which soon whirled them on their road to London.

CHAPTER XIII.

The metropolis of England, so imposing in its appearance to every stranger, could not fail to strike both Mrs. Falknor and her daughter with astonishment at its size and magnificence. It was, besides, at a period when they entered it, that all Europe, oppressed by the horrors of war, had their eyes fixed upon the combined armies then concentrated around Paris; and from whose prowess they looked for the destruction of the *tyrant* who had so long and so unjustly usurped the throne of France: and with that, the restoration of *peace!*—a period when fresh intelligence of success in the general cause arrived daily, animated every heart, and burst forth in thanksgivings from every tongue!—a period, when

every succeeding night vied with the former in the brilliancy of its splendour, and all the inhabitants appeared possessed with gratitude and joy!

At a season like this Mrs. Falknor could not but be much interested. Few individuals, perhaps, had more at stake than herself. A *country!*—a *father!*—and more than all, a *husband!* whose safety and preservation she imagined were combined with the succeeding events; and she now looked forward every day to fresh communications and fresh incidents with the most agitating impatience.

Lord Falknor, whom his daughter had tried in vain to render a convert to what he called her chimerical hopes and wild expectations, and who saw in all this only the workings of Providence for his country's good, and the especial welfare of all Europe, could not be brought to believe that *he* should ostensibly reap any benefit from the changes which were now

expected to take place; and, excepting the pleasure which he enjoyed from the society of these two interesting females, now become doubly dear to him, he experienced no diminution of that gloom, which, originating in disappointment, and cherished by indulgence, was become habitual.

One morning that the joyful peals from many a church steeple proclaimed the arrival of intelligence, gratifying in its nature to the ears of every well-disposed Englishman, Lord Falknor, whose mind was not in perfect unison with the general hilarity of the day, had retired to his study in order to spend, if possible, a few hours in uninterrupted tranquillity. Here he had not long indulged in the retirement he sought, ere his ears were saluted by the sound of an equipage driving furiously up the street, which a tremendous rapping at the door of his own mansion, announced had reached the place of its destination.

Expecting no company, and rather curious to observe who it was that came in such a "questionable shape," his lordship advanced to the window which fronted the street, in order to make his observations. Here he beheld a foreign carriage, to which were attached four post-horses, all in a foam; and from which a gentleman was in the act of alighting. Immediately afterwards he observed him turn, in order to assist one, apparently some years his senior, and to whom he proffered the most cautious attention. The elapse of a moment hid them from his sight—they had entered the house—he hears them advancing—the door is thrown open, and—Henry Falknor, panting with expectation and delight, precipitately rushes to receive a father's embrace!

To describe the mingled sensations of astonishment, paternal affection, and refined delight, which assailed the bosom of Lord Falknor at this unexpected *ren-*

contre, is impossible. Joy, at once more holding to his bosom a son whom he had mourned as for ever lost to him, reigned predominant; and overpowered by the conflict, he sunk into his chair, unable to give vent to the acuteness of his feelings.

A short time having elapsed in giving way to the transport which oppressed him, and in which silence had been more expressive than utterance could have been on such an occasion, when Henry proceeded to introduce his companion as a gentleman to whom he was indebted for safety, protection, and even life! adding, "that at a time when he was unfortunately exposed to a wild licentious rabble, under the guidance of their no less vile conductor, Murat, who proceeded to persecute him principally because he could boast the proud prerogative of being an Englishman; this gentleman discovering, by accident, the malevolence of their designs, had boldly risked his own safety, by secreting him

in his house, from the power of his enemies; thereby not only saving his life, but affording him protection afterwards: and in fine, that, tired of the excesses which he daily saw committed by this tyrant of the Italian states and his myrmidons, he had taken the first opportunity afforded by the crisis of affairs, to quit his country and fly with him to England; where he, Henry, was sure of returning that protection which had been afforded him, by confiding in the gratitude of a generous father!"

This hasty sketch immediately induced Lord Falknor to open his arms to the stranger in a welcome embrace, as to a person to whom he should owe an everlasting obligation; at the same time calling upon his son to assist him in evincing his constant gratitude by every attention in his power.

The ebullition of surprise having in some measure evaporated, Lord Falknor recollected himself sufficiently to inquire

if they had taken their morning's repast; when, being answered in the negative, he led the way to the breakfast-room, from which Medora had not yet retired. Here a surprise equal to that his father had but just experienced, awaited the astonished Henry. A lady, young, beautiful as the fabled Hourii, and in whose lineaments he discovered traces that had once fired his soul, presiding at his father's breakfast-table! Who and what could she be? Whilst his lordship intent only on doing the honours of his house, and bewildered by the preceding occurrence, overlooked both his son's astonishment and the necessary form of introduction, by hastily applying to the lovely girl to order a fresh breakfast.

Medora in silence hastened to obey her grandfather, whilst the stranger, as well as Mr. Henry Falknor, continued to gaze on the bright vision before them, every moment adding to the interest they both felt in her favour, when the

door opening, their eyes were diverted from gazing on one lovely object to fix upon another, less young, less beautiful, perhaps, but not less interesting!

Mrs. Falknor, who had for some time awaited the appearance of her daughter in their sitting-room, and finding she did not come, concluded she had been detained by something particular, had descended in pursuit of her. On opening the parlour door she in her turn experienced a degree of astonishment at finding it thus occupied. But, who shall paint her surprise, her joy, her delight, when, in glancing at the strangers, she beheld in one of them her beloved, her revered, her idolized father!

All was confusion to the perception of Henry Falknor. The plot every moment thickened; nor could his bewildered senses penetrate even the surface. Medora also participated in his confusion. To have so lately discovered a grandfather in Lord Falknor, and now to be

again pressed to the bosom of another, appeared like the effect of enchantment; and she could scarcely trust the evidence of her senses, till an explanation ensued, which solved the mystery, even to the bewildered Henry, who, advancing towards Mrs. Falknor, said—

"Permit me to embrace, whilst I recognize in an object for ever estimable, a *sister!* whose welfare and happiness will be ever dear to me. As to you, my little Hebe," exclaimed he, turning to Medora, and catching her in his arms, "you would lay claim to my affection, even if I did not love you for the sake of your parents, whilst you possess that insinuating countenance." Then whispering Mrs. Falknor, "Can you wonder, dear madam, that, gifted with the same sentiments, I should agree with my brother in preferring you to all others; you cannot, therefore," added he with a beseeching expression, "refuse to pardon me my former transgressions."

Mrs. Falknor, whilst a tear of sensibility bedewed her cheek at the mention of his brother, presented him her hand in compact with Medora's, in token of amity and sisterly affection; which the gratified Henry repeatedly pressed to his lips, assuring her of his tenderest friendship and regard.

What a striking lesson was here presented to the proud, the scheming, the violent Lord Falknor! The man whom his opinion had degraded, whose alliance he had scorned as mean and contemptible, now stood before him, open and upright in conscious integrity, and above all, as the saviour and protecting angel of his son. Whilst conscience whispered his own unfeeling conduct towards the daughter of this very man whom he had despised, endeavoured to disgrace, and left, through his machinations, a stranger, to perish in a foreign land!

The minds of the whole party being wound up to the highest pitch of mental

feeling, Mrs. Falknor proposed leaving the gentlemen to take their meal in comfort, whilst she retired with Medora to obtain that degree of relaxation which she found necessary to their agitated frames.

Once more in retirement with her daughter, and observing her inquiring looks, she was proceeding to give an explanation relative to the past scene, when the reverberation of the knocker announced the approach of company; and in a few minutes Miss Dalton made her appearance.

" Nothing but agreeable surprises, this morning, mama," whispered Medora, as she passed to welcome their much esteemed friend, who, they soon learned, had quitted Bath with the intention of spending a month or two in town before they finally settled respecting their summer abode.

This circumstance proved highly agreeable to both mother and daughter,

as they had ever entertained the highest regard for this lady, who, from a correspondence that was previously settled between them, was no stranger to the recent occurrence which had taken place in their favor, and now with real satisfaction congratulated them upon the event.

After mutual inquiries respecting the welfare of each other, &c. Mrs. Falknor was upon the point of relating the surprise of the morning, when a tap at the door, and a gentle intreaty for admission, put a stop to the conversation, and the communication was postponed by the appearance of Falknor himself.

Observing an additional female in the room, he was preparing to withdraw, not having changed his travelling costume, when a second glance, and a command to enter, enabled him to discern an old friend, to whom he advanced, with evident delight at the recognition.

Miss Dalton, greatly astonished at beholding one, whom she was long ago taught to believe had been numbered with the dead, displayed an agitation highly flattering to the self-love of the quick-sighted Henry; who could not help recalling to his memory the pleasure he used to experience in her society, although at that time devoted to another. Here, he again beheld her, the same mild, amiable being he had formerly approved; "And if," he argued, "a few years have flown over her head since we parted, they have perhaps passed more heavily over my own; we are therefore upon a par in that respect;" and whilst she continued to gain upon him in every succeeding interview, by the same propriety of conduct, for which he had esteemed her some years before, he could not help agreeing with him who says: "I believe that the heart often experiences a presentiment of its future destiny, that without bowing to the sove-

reignty of the individual, it may yet feel a new-born, unaccountable emotion at the presence of that very being, even when it beholds her without a tender sentiment, powerless of discerning that wherefore, which rests in futurity."

CHAPTER XIV.

Gossip report was not long in proclaiming the recent events, which had taken place in Lord Falknor's family. The unlooked for, and unexpected return of one son was productive of many surmises, conjectures, and expectations respecting the other, who had been for so long a period, an alien to his country, and to his friends; and Lord Ashdale, when he was informed of the extraordinary return of a cousin, although esteeming Henry, and rejoicing in his arrival, would much rather it had been his more highly esteemed friend the accomplished Arthur.

No sooner did the surprising intelligence reach the ears of the earl, than willing to conciliate his uncle, with

whom perverse incidents, and foolish misunderstandings, had kept him for several years at variance, than with his whole family he set out immediately, to embrace, and offer a sincere and affectionate welcome to the so long estranged Henry.

Lady Ashdale, no more than her lord, had been slow to offer her gratulations upon this unexpected occurrence. The gay, the eccentric Henry, had always with her been a favourite; and whilst she seriously censured his vices, she could not help allowing him virtues under that careless exterior, which he certainly never possessed, and esteeming him accordingly. Sincere then was the greeting on all sides, an amnesty being passed by Lord Falknor upon all old grievances; but the reconciliation was not deemed complete by his lordship, till every member of the family was included in it; he, therefore, after prefac-

ing the subject to Lady Ashdale, rang the bell, and requested the presence of Medora and her mother.

Astonishment now took a different cast of expression, and rested chiefly on the countenance of Augustus, upon the entrance of the ladies. He had visited Lord Falknor, with the express purpose of embracing a new found cousin, but he had never dreamt of meeting the idol of his soul under that roof, and that too in the endearing semblance of a relative! A variety of ideas, indescribable in their nature, rushed through his brain, whirling him from point to point, till at last he rested on the prominent one of being able to avow his affection for this lovely girl, without fear of degradation on his side, or of experiencing reproof from his parents. This idea was an heavenly one, and he hugged it to his bosom, whilst he advanced with rapture to claim kindred with this long loved object of his adoration.

Neither the transport, which had so

suddenly seized Augustus, nor the trembling confusion of Medora passed unnoticed by Lord Ashdale. Suspicion, as to her being the late inmate of Kirkaldy-hall, rushed through his mind, which, by a short conversation with Mrs. Falknor, was soon reduced to conviction; when his lordship with a sincere wish that she had confided in him, proceeded to express his regret for the misunderstanding that had occasioned her so much trouble.

"That my daughter did not discover herself to her husband's family," replied the father of Mrs. Falknor, "was in some measure owing to a restriction of mine. A proud one, I grant, and for which she has been severely punished, by the humiliation she has so many years endured. But knowing her to be a proper match in point of family, and believing her to be such in point of fortune for the man she had chosen, I could not reconcile her appearing as an intruder in the eyes of his family."

What an era was this for Lord Falknor; after so long a period of "hope deferred," agitation and disappointment, thus to see his family surrounding him, united and happy; with a prospect in perspective, of beholding the second generation still more closely united, by the bonds of conjugal affection! Nothing was now wanting to render his present felicity permanent and complete, but the re-appearance of his first-born, his darling Arthur: or, if that were denied him, to receive some intelligence respecting his fate, even if it tended to confirm the certainty of his loss, and to bid him hope no more!

Happier in himself, than he had been for years, Lord Falknor endeavoured to make all around him equally so, and the time sped pleasantly along. Medora, the joy and delight of her doating grandfather, and the dearest object of affection to Augustus, had not a wish ungratified. And if a sigh heaved the bosom, or a tear bedewed the cheek of

Mrs. Falknor, in spite of the happiness which surrounded her, at the remembrance of her long lost husband, the sight of her parent, making one in the family circle, and the recollection of the happy prospect awaiting her beloved Medora, would quickly banish the intruders, and make her raise her heart to Heaven in thankfulness for the blessings already awarded her.

Medora, whom no degree of present happiness could render forgetful of former benefits, longed for her friend Eliza to participate in her new found pleasures; and to that end, with the approbation of her mother, she petitioned her grandfather to invite the dear girl to town. Too fond of indulging her every wish, to think of a denial, Lord Falknor immediately assented, and the invitation was dispatched accordingly to D——. In a week it was conjectured she would be able to set out from home, when it was agreed they should give her the meeting about twenty miles up the road.

The expected morning at length arrived, when the travellers, escorted by Augustus, commenced their journey; and arrived at the appointed place a short time after their friends. The meeting on both sides may be easily imagined, kind, respectful, and affectionate; and the evening which they meant to pass together, promised much enjoyment.

Whilst Mrs. Falknor was confiding to the ears of her friend Mr. Johnston, who accompanied his daughter thus far on her way, some of the leading events which had occurred since their separation, the attention of the young people who had been drawn towards the window, was suddenly attracted by the arrival of a travelling carriage, from the door of which soon issued a military hat and feather, followed by a very elegant looking man.

"More arrivals from the continent," exclaimed Augustus, "poor fellows, I

rejoice to see them at any rate, but more particularly so, when they return safe and sound, from the imminent dangers they have had to encounter."

"But here comes one," rejoined Medora, whilst she regarded an emaciated figure descending from the vehicle, supported by the officer who had first alighted, "which does not appear to correspond with your wishes. Poor man!" continued she, "he must either have been severely wounded, or a material sufferer from other causes."

By this time the object of their observation had disappeared by entering the house, and put an end to their discourse respecting him; although the impression which his debilitated condition had made on their minds, did not so easily vanish. For a long time they continued to converse on the miseries attendant on war, the cruelties and atrocities of that *tyrant* of mankind, the sanguinary Buonaparte, and their hopes of his final overthrow.

The time for separating at length arrived. The carriage was already at the door, and Mr. Johnston preparing to take his leave, when a servant entered the room, and presented compliments from a gentleman below, begging the honour of five minutes' conversation with the gentleman belonging to their party.

Augustus felt rather surprised at the singularity of this message, not being aware of any friend or acquaintance that could possibly recognize him in this spot; he however prepared to leave the room, but this Mrs. Falknor prevented by requesting that they might be no impediment to the entrance of any one; Augustus therefore desired the gentleman might be admitted.

In a few minutes the sounds of ascending footsteps announced the near approach of the visitor, when all eyes were turned towards the door in expectation of who should enter. The suspense was

of short duration. The military officer, whom Augustus had remarked descending from the carriage at the door of the inn, advanced into the room, followed by his invalid friend; and politely addressing Augustus, begged leave to know if any part of *Lord Falknor's* family were present, as the armorial bearings upon the carriage, then at the door, denoted its belonging to that nobleman?

"In myself, Sir, you see a distant relative of Lord Falknor's," answered Augustus without hesitation, "but those ladies," pointing towards Medora and her mother, "boast a much nearer degree of consanguinity, being his daughter and grand-daughter."

"*His daughter!*" falteringly ejaculated the invalid, in a stifled tone, "*his daughter!*" again repeated he, whilst every limb trembled with suppressed emotion, "merciful Heaven! who can she be?" then rushing forward with all the force

he could muster, again exclaimed, "Is it, can it be, my own, my long lost Medora?"

Like the Grecian painter, I must draw a veil over the scene I am unable to delineate, and content myself with informing my readers that the Hon. Arthur Falknor, so long and so deservedly lamented, as for ever lost, was at length returned, to solace the evening of his father's days, and to reward the constancy of an affectionate wife! Unheard of disasters, and unforeseen disappointments had been his lot for the first few years of his quitting England's shores; when, after escaping a succession of evils, he at length fell into the toils of Buonaparte's emissaries during their attack upon some of the Italian states, from whence he was carried a captive into France. Here, immured in a loathsome dungeon without being allowed the privilege of writing either to Genoa or to England, to announce his fate, weeks,

months, and years, had rolled on, without his friends being able to discover where he was, or even if he was still in existence! The expulsion of the tyrant from Paris, by the combined armies, and the entrance of the British troops into that city, proved the signal of liberty to hundreds of their countrymen, who had been unjustly detained there; and amongst the many, whom, an officer, warm in the cause of his country's charter, had liberated from horrid captivity, was Mr. Falknor. Not content with leading him from a dreary cell, where, denied the blessings of air, light, and exercise, he wasted his days in hopeless despondence, this warm-hearted character had continued to support and befriend him ever since; and, in fine, had accompanied him once more, to his long regretted, long desired country!

The high wrought sensibilities of the parties the most interested in this meeting, having a little subsided, Mr. Falk-

nor begged to present, in the person of Captain Hardwicke, his friend and preserver. My readers will no doubt recognize this gentleman also, as the admirer of the gentle Anna Lutwyche, whose society he hoped soon to enjoy for life; and to whom he now looked for the blessings of peace, retirement, and comfort, after the fatigues and dangers of protracted war. This young lady had buried her father, the good and amiable Doctor, some years; since when, consigned to the care of an aunt in town, she had passed her time improving in mental perfection, and in the anxious expectation of the peace which was to restore to her all she loved. To again behold this object of his early affections, Captain Hardwicke was posting, when chance, so opportunely for Mr. Falknor, presented to his view his father's carriage, and by that means enabled him to fold to his bosom objects dearer to him than life it-

self, and which he knew not were in existence!

What a compensation was here for the exile! one that richly repaid him for the years of confinement, hardship, and misery he had endured! To behold again an adored wife, still young and still lovely, for the midnight vigil had not faded the rose on her cheek, was extasy; and what might be deemed still more gratifying to his feeling heart was the being hailed as a *parent* by so lovely, so sweet a blossom as Medora! Folding her therefore again and again to his throbbing heart, he lifted his soul in gratitude to that benign Power, who in its own good time gives us what is best, and watches for our safety.

In Augustus, Mr. Falknor was not long in discovering the family resemblance, nor in embracing him as the son of his early and most cherished friend; and when he perceived by the tell-tale

blushes of Medora, and the trembling hesitation of the youth himself, that their hearts were not in their own possession, he experienced an addition to the happiness with which his cup already overflowed, and tenderly uniting, and pressing both their hands in his own, he bestowed upon them a fervent benediction.

To M[illegible] M[illegible]r presented as a gentleman to whom she owed the greatest obligations, he expressed his gratitude in the strongest terms; and whilst both Eliza and her father shed tears of joy at this happy meeting and re-union of their friends, the most prominent wish of this artless girl was, that William Barnard had been present, to have shared in the happiness which she herself experienced.

And now, what remained for Arthur Falknor?—Returned once more to his native isle—blessed with the presence of an adored and adoring wife—happy in

the society of a beloved daughter—surrounded by endearing friends—what, but to seek that revered parent—that affectionate brother, and that respected home, which he had quitted under such different circumstances "*Twenty Years Ago!*"

END OF VOL. III

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